REDEMPTION AND CHAOS: A STUDY IN THE SYMBOLISM OF THE RABBINIC AGGADA

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PREFACE

In many religious traditions, there is evidence that men perceive a fundamental paradox in their lives: they see in themselves and in their world evidence of order, and at the same time evidence of disorder. They see evidence of permanence and stability, yet there is also perishability and flux. For those who sense this paradox, the relationships and tensions between these two dimensions of experience may be constitutive of human life at its deepest level. Thus they hope to achieve some understanding of order, chaos, and their relationship, so that they may ultimately gain an integrated understanding of human life and their own lives. To achieve such a unified understanding many turn to religion. Through religion, man may express his longing to transcend that which is disordered and unstable; yet at the same time man may try to accept that in his life which is chaotic and limits order. One of the central themes in many religious traditions is the attempt to incorporate both the experience of chaos and the desire to overcome chaos in a single understanding of man and his world.

I have chosen to explore this problem as it is expressed in one group of sources from the Jewish tradition -- the rabbinic aggada. In the view of rabbinic Judaism, a permanent elimination of the power of chaos in the world will not occur until the future redemption -- the Messianic age and the world to come.[1] However, according to the aggada, a temporary state of redemption has occurred once in the past for the Jewish people as a whole. This was at the time of

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[1] Much of the study of redemption in Judaism has concerned itself with the various terms used to denote the future redeemed world. A most common observation is that the "Messianic age" is a this-worldly religio-political and national perfection, while the "world to come" is an other-worldly spiritual utopia; the two are separated by the last judgment. There is certainly evidence to support this view. However, for purposes of this study I have ignored this distinction because the very same themes seem to be repeated in descriptions of the future world, regardless of what that future world is called. That is, the Messianic age, the world to come, the future to come [Heb. *l'ʻatid labo'*], the Garden of Eden -- all seem to express the same religious experiences and aspirations. In fact, it seems that the most common of these usages is "the future to come," although that term is usually ignored in attempts to schematize the Messianic age/world to come distinction.

The artificiality of such scholarly schematizations has been remarked on by several scholars. Joseph Klausner (*The Messianic Idea in Israel*, trans. by W. F. Stinespring [New York: Macmillan Co., 1955], p. 408) says: "Throughout the post-Biblical literature the Messianic age, the life after death, and the New World that is to follow the resurrection of the dead are constantly interchanged." Salo W. Baron (*A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. V: *Religious Controls and Dissentions* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1957], pp. 147, 148) refers to the apocalypticists as having "the question, as yet unresolved in their minds, concerning the difference between that age and the eschatological world-to-come. This confusion . . . even in the talmudic period had led to the indiscriminate use of the term *l'ʻatid labo'* (the ultimate future) for both the Hereafter (*ʻolam haba'*) and the days of the Messiah (*y'mot hamašiaḥ*)." According to George Foot Moore (*Judaism, the Age of the Tannaim*, Vol. II [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966], pp. 323, 378), "In all the earlier part of our period the two are not sharply distinguished, but run into each other and blend like the overlapping edges of two clouds . . . . The periodization of the hereafter is not always consistent either in conception or in designation . . . . There is in this sphere not merely an indefiniteness of terminology but an indistinctness of conception." Gershom G. Scholem (*The Messianic Idea in Jewish History and Other Essays* [New York: Schocken Books, 1971], p. 8) says: "In an original version catastrophe and utopia do not twice follow after each other, but it is precisely by their uniqueness that they bring to bear with full force the two sides of the Messianic event."

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the Exodus and the revelation at Mount Sinai.[2] Thus, if we want to learn about the relationship of chaos to the rabbinic Jew's highest religious aspiration -- his hope for redemption -- we may profitably study the aggadot concerning redemption. The focus of this dissertation is the past redemption as described in the aggada and the role ascribed to the experience of chaos in that redemption.

Previous studies of the meaning of redemption in the aggada seem to have failed to take account of the problem of chaos as a mode of religious experience.[3] This lack may point to the possibility (which will be discussed in the Introduction) that a new methodology will yield a greater understanding of the material. Any of several different methodologies might be helpful; I have chosen (for reasons to be advanced in the Introduction) to use the phenomenology of religion, particularly as employed in the work of Mircea Eliade, and to consider the aggada as a corpus of religious symbols. Thus the central problem being dealt with in this dissertation may be expressed as follows: by the application of Mircea Eliade's work to the symbols in the legendary rabbinic aggadot dealing with redemption, what can we learn about the relationship of chaos and redemption as it is expressed in the aggada?

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[2] The parallel between past and future redemption has been noted by scholars. The point has recently been stressed by Jacob Neusner as part of what he calls "the mythic structure of classical Judaism." (See Part I of his The Way of Torah: An Introduction to Judaism [2d. ed. The Religious Life of Man Series, Encino and Belmont, Calif.: Dickenson Publishing Co., 1974].) However, I believe that future study could bring out these parallels in greater detail and show parallels between creation and redemption in the rabbinic tradition as well. The present study grows out of such a larger project; I had hoped to study the aggadot on creation, past redemption, and future redemption, in each case giving the following structure to the presentation: (1) the new or redeemed cosmos, (2) the process of cosmicization by which it is attained, (3) the role of chaos in that process. I believe that such a study would show the striking parallels among the three sets of aggadot in all three categories. However, limitations of space and energy forced me to make choices. Thus I have studied the redeemed cosmos of both future and past redemptions, and the process by which it is attained (cosmicization and chaos) in the past redemption alone.

[3] All of the studies of redemption to be mentioned in the Introduction point out the descriptions of chaos which are said to precede the final redemption in rabbinic literature. However, I am unaware of any studies which deal with chaos (and its relationship to redemption) as a dimension of personal religious experience. And I am unaware of any studies which even mention the existence of chaos motifs in connection with the past redemption.

As will be explained in Chapter One, Eliade's theory of religion posits absolute reality -- the sacred -- as the object of religious experience. Both cosmic order and a plenitude of life are fundamental aspects of absolute reality. Chaos, in Eliade's view, may serve at least three functions. It may "dissolve" a previously existing situation, eliminating the effects of the past by restoring individual, community, or world to the formlessness which precedes all creation. Such a "dissolution" leads to the second function of chaos -- providing a "blank slate" which allows new creation to take place and providing the "seeds" or potential force to bring about a new creation. Finally, chaos may represent absolute reality itself as a union or coincidence of opposites. However, a fundamental problem remains which Eliade never solves definitively: can there be an experience of absolute reality and chaos simultaneously?

In the following chapters I shall try to show that

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each of these three functions of chaos in Eliade's theory finds an equivalent affirmation in the aggadot[4] concerning redemption, while the problem of chaos and absolute reality being experienced simultaneously is given a definite answer in the aggada. Chapter Two will show that the description of the future redeemed world stresses precisely cosmic order and abundant life, as well as other features of the sacred noted by Eliade. This will make the use of Eliade in analyzing the aggada all the more plausible. Yet this chapter will also show that there is an element of chaos reflected in the perfected world of the future. Chapter Three, on the Exodus, is divided into three parts. Part I will show that the Israelites redeemed from Egypt are said to inhabit a redeemed state with the same religious significance as that described in Chapter Two. Part II will show that redemption involves a new creation of a cosmos, which, according to Eliade, is the time when cosmos and life are most fully manifest. Part III will show that the first two of Eliade's three functions of chaos are reflected in the Exodus aggadot: the old situation of the Israelites is "dissolved" and the potential for a new situation is provided. However, it will be clear that in each of the three parts the experience is merely a different aspect of the single experience of redemption at the hands of a single God.

Chapter Four, on the wandering in the desert, will reinforce all of these conclusions. But it will also show

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[4] "Aggadot" is the plural of "aggada". See the Introduction for an explanation of the term "aggada".

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that, in the aggada, God represents the unity, the coincidence of opposites, which Eliade identifies with chaos. Thus it appears that all three functions of chaos described by Eliade are experienced by the Israelites as acts of the God who also represents absolute reality. Chapter Five, on the symbols of the manna, the well, and Amalek, will discuss Eliade's concept of "spiritualization"[5] and show that the Israelites, as they proceed toward Sinai, become increasingly spiritualized. Yet it will appear that this process is linked directly to an increasing experience of chaos.

This double-sided process will be seen to culminate in Chapter Six, on the revelation at Sinai, in the ultimate experience of absolute reality -- immediate revelation of God Himself -- and simultaneously the ultimate experience of chaos -- actual death. Yet it is precisely this ultimate experience which enables the Israelites to achieve the perfect redeemed state. As will be seen throughout, this perfection implies that the power of chaos to effect change and limit order is negated. Yet the paradox remains that chaos must be experienced in order to be overcome, and the conclusion of the aggada is overwhelmingly that both chaos and redemption are two aspects of the single experience of absolute reality. The implications of these finding will be discussed in the Conclusion.

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[5] The term "spiritualization", as Eliade uses it, generally refers to transcending the biological and temporal limitations imposed upon man by the fact of his humanity and mortality. See Chapter V, Part IV for more elaboration.

This study has implications for the interpretation of the understanding of chaos and its role in religious experience arising out of the aggadic texts. I believe that this understanding provides an important alternative to the modern Western view which often devalues or ignores the experience of chaos. However, regardless of the conclusions, I hope that the methodological approach to the aggada employed here may serve to broaden the outlook of students of rabbinic Judaism; I believe that phenomenologists of religion can make a significant contribution to a deeper understanding of the aggada and the Jewish tradition in general.

INTRODUCTION: ON METHODOLOGY

I

This introduction outlines the literature being studied in this dissertation, previous methodologies used in the study of the literature, and the particular methodology which will be employed here.

The word "aggada" literally means "telling"; it is usually defined negatively as the corpus of non-legal writings of the rabbinic tradition, to distinguish it from the halakah (literally "walking," "path"), the legal writings. This differentiation between aggada and halakah refers to the content, not the form, of the literature, and it is a differentiation widely recognized in the rabbinic texts themselves.[1] In a formal sense, the bulk of the aggada is midrash -- exegesis of Biblical verses -- either in line by line interpretation or in lengthy discourses on single verses (which often employ many other Biblical verses along the way). While there is halakic midrash -- discussion of legal matters through midrashic form and method -- I have employed only the aggadic portions of the midrash. In addition to midrash, there are aggadot which are in the form of legendary narratives, elaborating on Biblical events but not consisting of exegeses of

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[1] See, for instance, The Babylonian Talmud, Soṭah 40a: "Rabbi Abbahu searched into aggada and Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba searched into halakah." Note that the same word "searched" [Heb. daraš] is used in both cases. The term midrash ("searching into") denotes a literary category and method rather than

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particular verses, and there are eschatological narratives as well. I have drawn upon both types of narrative material as well as the aggadic midrash for the present study.

From another point of view, the aggadic material employed here may be termed "the legends of the Jews," following the title of Louis Ginzberg's well-known collection.[2] However, Ginzberg only included under this title the elaboration of Biblical material. For our purposes another important subject-matter is the vast number of aggadot concerning the Messianic and eschatological redemption expected in the future, as the parallel between past and future redemption must be demonstrated in detail. It is an interesting fact that no midrashic work is devoted explicitly to the classical prophetic books which form the basis of Jewish eschatology. Yet throughout the aggada there are numerous eschatological motifs related to single verses from the prophets. In addition, there are many eschatological sayings attributed to the rabbis found throughout the aggada which are not explicitly midrashic, as well as the apocalyptic work which has been collected in Eben-Shmuel's *Midrasei G'ʾulah*.[3] Thus the aggadic

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a specific content or subject-matter. For other instances of rabbinic reference to the halakah/aggada differentiation see H.N. Bialik and Y.N. Ravnitzky, eds., *Sefer Haʾaggadah* (3rd. ed., Tel-Aviv: Hozeit Dvir, 1948), pp. 4-5.

[2] Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (7 vols., Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1909-1938).

[3] Jehudah Eben-Shmuel, ed., *Midrašeî G'ʾulah* (Jerusalem: Hozeit Mosad Bialik, 1954).

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texts being employed in this study may be termed "legends of the Jews" if that title is extended to include the epochal events of the future as well as the Biblical past.

The qualifying adjective "rabbinic" is used here to define the aggada in a negative sense; i.e., to exclude many texts which Ginzberg, for example, made great use of in his collection. Among the types of works not used here are apocryphal and pseudepigraphal works, Hellenistic works, Josephus, non-Hebrew Bible versions, non-Jewish writings, and mystical works.[4] All of the types of literature just enumerated provide valuable and interesting aggadot. They have been excluded from this study partly in order to make the amount of material manageable, and partly because I have tried to elucidate the themes studied here strictly as they appear in rabbinic Judaism. Though the origins of the motifs studied may be very old, the forms and texts as we have them today arose in rabbinic circles in rabbinic times and continued to be circulated and widely read among Jews throughout the medi-

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[4] A few texts have been drawn from Adolph Jellinek, ed., Beît Hamidraš (6 vols., Jerusalem: Bamberger and Wahrmann, 1938) which are probably to be included under the category of mystical works. The only one used at all extensively is Seder Gan ʿEden (Version I: Beît Hamidraš, Vol. II; Version II: Beît Hamidraš, Vol. III), in both versions, which appears quite frequently in Chapter Two of this study. However, this text is not interpreted here in its mystical sense; its symbols are taken as part of the general symbol structure of the non-mystical aggada. On this non-mystic level Seder Gan ʿEden shows a striking correspondence with many other aggadic texts, which indicates that its author drew on traditional material, although he may have intended it to carry new, mystical meanings. In fact, this work is especially valuable because it draws together so much material that is widely scattered elsewhere in non-mystical texts.

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eval period. The same cannot be said for the kinds of works excluded.

II

Rabbinic Jews have always studied the rabbinic literature, writing copious commentaries and sometimes even commentaries on commentaries. But the modern critical study of rabbinic literature can be traced directly to the "*Wissenschaft des Judentums*" -- the "scientific study of Judaism" -- a movement which originated in Germany in the early nineteenth century. The nineteenth century representatives of this movement set patterns of study which persist to the present day, and their approach both in halakic and aggadic material must be briefly surveyed, as the two areas show some striking similarities.

One of the first great works of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* movement was Zacharias Frankel's *Darkeî Hamišnah*.[5] In this work Frankel made the first critical survey of the methodology employed in the classic halakic works, the Mišnah and Talmud. At about the same time, a critical study of philology in the halakic texts was being pursued by Raphael N. Rabbinowicz, whose life work was the monumental *Diqduqeî Sof'rîm*[6] This is a critical edition of the first three and one-half principal divisions of the Babylonian Talmud (Zera‘im, Mo‘ed, N'zîqîn, and part of Qodašîm). Two attempts of fundamental importance were made to write a history of the halakah and its literature -- I.H. Weiss: *Dor Dor V'doršav*[7] and Isaac Halevy: *Dorot Hariʾšonîm*.[8] Weiss in particular was the first to employ modern critical and historical methodology to the subject. Another contribution of late nineteenth century scholarship which continues to be a standard reference work is Herman L. Strack: *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch*.[9]

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[5] Zacharias Frankel, *Darkeî Hamišnah* (Leipzig: H. Honneger, 1859; supplement: Leipzig: H. Honneger, 1867; new ed., Warsaw: M.Y.L. Tsailingold, 1923).

[6] Raphael N. Rabbinowicz, *Diqduqeî Sof'rîm* (15 vols., Munich, 1867-96; facsimile of Munich edition, Jerusalem: Maʿyan Hahokmah, 1959-60).

The study of halakic literature in the twentieth century has largely followed the lines set down by these nineteenth century pioneers. A truly modern philological approach was initiated in the works of Jacob N. Epstein: *Maboʾ L'nusak Hamišnah*,[10] which laid out a basis for recovering the original text of the Mišnah, and two introductions to the philological study of halakic texts, *M'boʾot L'sifrut Hatannaʾîm*[11] and *M'boʾot L'sifrut Haʾamoraʾîm*.[12] An outstanding

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[7] I.H. Weiss, *Dor Dor V'Doršav* (5 vols., Vienna, 1871-91; Vilna, 1904.)

[8] Isaac Halevy, *Dorot Hariʾšonîm* (6 vols., Frankfurt-am-Main, 1897-1939).

[9] Herman L. Strack, *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1887; 5th ed., Munich: Beck, 1920).

[10] Jacob. N. Epstein, *Maboʾ L'nusak Hamišnah* (2 vols., Jerusalem, 1948; 2nd. ed., 2 vols., Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1964).

[11] Jacob. N. Epstein, *M'boʾot L'sifrut Hatannaʾîm*, ed. by E.Z. Melamed (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1957).

[12] Jacob. N. Epstein, *M'boʾot L'sifrut Haʾamoraʾîm*, ed. by E.Z. Melamed (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1962).

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practitioner of philological study in producing sound critical editions is Saul Lieberman, whose commentary on the Tosefta, Toseftaʾ Kip'šutah,[13] is considered a model in its field.[14] An outstanding modern edition of the Mišnah with critical commentary has been produced by Chanok Albeck,[15] who has also written introductions to halakic literature: Maboʾ L'mišnah[16] and Maboʾ L'talmudîm.[17] The Palestinian Talmud has been given modern critical scrutiny by Louis Ginzberg: Perušîm V'Ḫidušîm B'Yerušalmî[18] and by Lieberman.[19]

A recent attempt to survey the methods used in halakic texts is Louis Jacobs' Studies in Talmudic Logic and Me-

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[13] Saul Lieberman, Toseftaʾ Kip'šutah (3 vols., New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1955-62/63). The Toseftaʾ is a third century collection of Tannaitic texts not included in the authoritative law code, the Mišnah.

[14] Lieberman has also published an earlier edition of the Tosefta, Tosefet Riʾšonîm (4 vols., Jerusalem: Bamberger and Wahrmann, 1937-39), a commentary on the Palestinian Talmud, Hayerušalmî Kip'šuto (Jerusalem: Hozeit Darom, 1934), and two significant works on Greek influence in rabbinic literature: Greek in Jewish Palestine (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1942; 2d. ed., New York: P. Feldheim, 1965) and Hellenism in Jewish Palestine (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950; 2d. ed., New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1962).

[15] Chanoch Albeck, The Mišnah (6 vols., Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1957-60).

[16] Chanoch Albeck, Maboʾ L'mišnah (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1959).

[17] Chanoch Albeck, Maboʾ L'talmudîm (Tel-Aviv: Ḫozeit Dvir, 1969).

[18] Louis Ginzberg, Perušîm V'ḫidušîm B'yerušalmî (4 vols., New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1941-61).

[19] See note 14 above.

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thodology.[20] Thus far in the twentieth century one major attempt to trace the history of the halakah has been made. This is Chaim Tchernowitz' *Tol'dot Hahalakah*[21] and *Tol'dot Haposqîm*.[22] In his work Tchernowitz consciously set out to improve upon the works of Weiss and Halevy by taking into account social and political factors which he felt they had neglected, and by tracing rabbinic law back to Biblical roots.[23] Historical aspects of Jewish law have also been studied extensively in a series of works by Boaz Cohen.[24] Most recently, Jacob Neusner has attempted to use modern textual criticism and source criticism as a means for studying the halakah historically. The result of such study for reconstructing the history of Judaism may be seen in his *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees Before 70*.[25] His attempt to write the internal history of one aspect of the halakah appears in *A History of the Misnaic Law of Purities*.[26]

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[20] Louis Jacobs, *Studies in Talmudic Logic and Methodology* (London: Vallentine, Mitchell, 1961).

[21] Chaim Tchernowitz, *Tol'dot Hahalakah* (4 vols.; New York, 1934-50).

[22] Chaim Tchernowitz, *Tol'dot Haposqîm* (3 vols. ;New York: Vaʿad Hayobel, 1946-49).

[23] J.K. Mikliszanski, "Tchernowitz, Chaim," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 1972, XV, cols. 883-884.

[24] Boaz Cohen, *Law and Tradition in Judaism* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1959); *Jewish and Roman Law* (2 vols.; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1966).

[25] Jacob Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees Before 70* (3 vols.; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971).

[26] Jacob Neusner, *A History of the Mishnaic Law of Purities* (6 parts; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974-75).

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In sum, it can be said that the efforts of the outstanding students of halakic literature have been directed into the three main areas established in the nineteenth century: philological studies attempting to establish accurate texts, historical studies attempting to provide a proper chronological explanation of the halakah, and (to a lesser extent) studies in the methodology of halakic discussions. Turning to the study of aggadic literature, we find very much the same situation. The modern study of aggada is older than the study of halakah; it is, in fact, as old as the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* itself. The founder of the *Wissenschaft* movement, Leopold Zunz, chose the aggadic literature as the subject of his first major study -- *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*.[27] Zunz was the first to bring scholarly historical method to bear on rabbinic literature, and he stressed particularly that synagogue preaching was the most likely *sitz im leben* of most of the aggadic texts.

A major contribution to the historical study of aggada was made by Wilhelm Bacher. In a series of works[28] he sorted out the mass of aggadic texts according to author, thus providing a chronological framework for the study of indivi-

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[27] Leopold Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden* (Berlin: A. Asher, 1832; 2d. ed.; Frankfurt a.M.: J. Kauffman, 1892; [revised Hebrew translation: Chanoch Albeck, *Haderašot B'yiśraʾel* Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1947]).

[28] Wilhelm Bacher, *Die Agada der Babylonischen Amoraer* (Strassburg: K.J. Trübner, 1878; reprinted edition, Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1967); *Die Agada der Tannaiten* (2 vols.; Strassburg: K.J. Trübner, 1884-90); *Die Agada der Palastinischen Amoraer* (3 vols.; Strassburg: K.J. Trübner, 1892-99).

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dual *logia* (whereas Zunz concentrated on the historical development of the aggadic books as a whole). Bacher also initiated the systematic study of technical terminology in the aggada in his *Exegetische Terminologie der judischen Traditionsliteratur*,[29] listing the terms alphabetically and explaining each. The work of I.H. Weiss should also be noted here, as his *Dor Dor V'doršav* mentioned above dealt with the history of aggadic as well as halakic texts.

As in the case of halakic literature, an important part of scholarship has been the compilation of critical editions of the texts. The chief figure in this field was Solomon Buber, who published critical editions of some fifteen aggadic texts between 1880 and 1905; among the most important of these are the new version of *Midraš Tanḫumaʾ* compiled by Buber and his edition of *Pesîktaʾ d'Rav Kahanaʾ*. His notes and introductions continue to be valuable sources of information for researchers. Another leading scholar, whose critical work was largely in the halakic midrashim(which, however, contain much important aggadic material), was Meir Friedmann (Ish-Shalom). Friedmann recovered many previously unknown sources and produced several critical editions between 1870 and 1908. The works of Buber and Friedmann still form the basis of research in critically edited aggadic texts.[30] Per-

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[29] Wilhelm Bacher, *Exegetische Terminologie der judischen Traditionsliteratur* (2 vols.; Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1899, 1905; reprinted ed., Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1965).

[30] See the works edited by Buber and Friedmann listed in the Bibliography of this study.

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haps the outstanding example of a sound modern text, however, is the *Midraš B'rʾešît Rabbah*[31] edited by Julius Theodor. Theodor has been called "the first to publish a text of rabbinic literature in a scientific and amended edition in accordance with the philological methods then current . . . . An instructive example of accuracy and care."[32] Chanoch Albeck should be mentioned here for his contributions in completing the works of Zunz and Theodor.

In the twentieth century two outstanding compilations of aggadic sources have been produced. H.N. Bialik and Y.N. Ravnitzky, *Sefer Haʾaggadah*, is an exhaustive collection of texts arranged according to subject matter, with brief explanatory notes. Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews* is a paraphrastic collection of aggadot on Biblical narratives, employing both rabbinic and non-rabbinic material. The notes in Ginzberg's work contain a huge amount of information on historical sources, cross-references and philological problems. There have also been attempts to use the rabbinic literature (largely the aggadic portions) as a basis for constructing "theologies" of rabbinic Judaism. Notable in this field are George Foot Moore's *The Age of the Tannaim* and Solomon Schechter's *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*.[33] These works are attempts at codification of the basic outlines of rabbinic belief, a task which the rabbis themselves never undertook because they never felt the need for uniformity in aggadic views (while the halakah, which demanded uniformity, was codified many times). In this connection the somewhat similar work of Max Kadushin may be mentioned, although Kadushin concentrated more on a rather personal and psychologizing interpretation of rabbinic Judaism.[34]

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[31] Julius Theodor and C. Albeck, *Midraš B'rʾešît Rabbah* (3 vols.; Berlin, 1903-36).

[32] Moshe David Herr, "Theodor, Julius," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 1972, XV, col. 1100.

[33] Solomon Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology: Major Concepts of the Talmud* (New York: Macmillan, 1909; 2d. ed.; New York: Schocken Books, 1961).

In the second half of the twentieth century four contributions to the study of aggadic literature seem to deserve special note. Isaac Heinemann's *Darkeî Haʾaggadah* is the single most important study of exegetical methodology in the aggada. In light of the emphasis noted here on historical and philological studies, it is interesting to note that Heinemann's work is divided into two main sections: "creative historiography" and "creative philology." E.E. Urbach's *Ḥazal, ʾEmunot V'deʿot* [36] is the most recent attempt to provide a codification of rabbinic belief similar to Moore's work. But Urbach sees himself as going beyond Moore; he criticizes the latter for ignoring too often the internal dynamic and historical development of rabbinic ideas and beliefs.[37] This em-

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[34] Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1952) and *Organic Thinking* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1938).

[35] Isaac Heinemann, *Darkeî Haʾaggadah* (1950; 2d. ed.; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1955).

[36] E.E. Urbach, *Ḥazal, ʾEmunot V'deʿot* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1969; 2d. ed.; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1971).

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

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phasis on history as the fundamental mode of explanation also appears in two recent French scholars who have studied the aggadic portions of the midrash. Renée Bloch, in two significant articles,[38] depicted the study of midrash as the search for historical roots in the late Biblical period and the search for historical lines of development, based on internal and external textual comparisons: "Le problème est donc de déterminer . . . le cheminement et l'ancienneté respective des traditions, la formation, la situation et l'interdépendence des écrits rabbiniques."[39] Geza Vermes, basing himself, like Bloch, on Paul Kahle's study of the history of Targumic literature,[40] writes of his *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*: "This work is intended principally to demonstrate the feasibility and value of an historical approach to Jewish exegesis."[41]

It would appear that on the whole, the modern study of aggada falls into the same three categories as the modern study of halakah: historical development, philological study

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[38] Renée Bloch, "Note méthodologique pour l'étude de la littérature rabbinique," *Recherches de sciences religieuses*, XLIII (1955), 194-227, and "Midrash," Vol. V of *Supplément au dictionnaire de la Bible*, ed. by Louis Pirot, *et al.*, (8 vols.; Paris: Letouzy, 1928-), cols. 1263-1280.

[39] Bloch, "Note méthodologique," 202.

[40] The Targumic literature consists of Aramaic translations of the Biblical text. Kahle's studies, emphasizing the early date of the Palestinian Targum, include *Masoreten des Westens* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1930; new ed. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1967) and *The Cairo Geniza* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947; 2d. ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1959).

[41] Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1961; 2d. ed.; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1973), p. 228.

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and critical editions, and methodological problems. In addition, because the aggada was never codified by the rabbis, modern scholars have undertaken the task of arranging the texts in some ordered fashion. The philological and methodological approaches may be termed formal studies; i.e., they are prerequisite to understanding the thought-content of the texts, but they do not give us such an understanding in themselves. Thus the two fundamental approaches to studying the religious ideas of the aggada have been the "theological" (i.e., the arrangement of texts under subject-headings so that the main ideas may be abstracted from them) and the historical.

III

If we examine the study of the rabbinic idea of redemption, we find that the historical and theological approaches are predominant. According to Joseph Klausner, author of an authoritative study on Jewish Messianism:

> In the Tannaitic period the Messianic idea had not yet become solely imaginative and spiritualized. It still had a definitely political side along with its exalted spiritual side; and the exuberant Oriental imagination had not yet made it merely a religious delusion embroidered with a spate of colors.[42]

Here "imagination" and "delusion" are identified with the spiritual aspect of the redemptive hope, which aspect is opposed to the historical and political side. It is the latter, in Klausner's view, which is the "true key" to understanding the texts which speak of future redemption: "Jewish history alone is the true key to the Jewish Messianic idea."[43] Urbach's discussion of redemption similarly revolves around the influence of historical events on rabbinic ideas. One of his sub-headings is significantly entitled: "realistic views and extremist thinkers"; the former are those who tie their expectations of redemption to real historical events. The relationship between the "realistic" and "extreme" approaches, and the historical *sitz im leben* of each, is Urbach's main focus. Another historian of Judaism, Nahum Glatzer, has discussed the detachment from history of the hope for redemption in the third century century aggadot. On the basis of the non-historical nature of the material he claims that "an air of irreality prevails" in these texts.[44] Glatzer implicitly equates "real" with "rooted in political and social history"; such an equation seems to be typical of the historical approach. While these historians have contributed much to our understanding of the subject, I believe that by implicitly defining the "real" as the "historical" they may have allowed historicism to operate as an *a priori* assumption that denies other important interpretations.

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[42] Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel, p. 389.

[43] Ibid., p. 407

Turning to the more "theologically" oriented works of Moore and Schechter, we find the attempt to abstract an essential core from the large mass of rabbinic texts as follows:

> Their religious significance lies not in attempts to make a picture out of the dissected puzzle of prophecy nor in the eschatological nightmares of the apocalypses, but consciously or unconsciously, in the idea that the history of the world is a plan of God, and in the faith

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[44] Nahum N. Glatzer, "The Attitude Toward Rome in Third Century Judaism," in *Politische Ordnung und Menschliche Existenz*. ed. by Alois Dempf, *et al*., (Munich: Beck, 1962).

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> that he will carry it out to the end. The value of the rest lay solely in that it helped men to give reality to their faith through an imaginative presentation . . . . Their religious significance lies in the definitive establishment of the doctrine of retribution after death, not in the variety of ways in which men imagined it.[45]

Here, in discussing both Messianic expectations and personal survival after death, Moore makes essentially the same point: there is one fundamental idea underlying all of the varied texts, and the "significance" of the texts is found in this single idea. In Moore's view, the many concrete images of the aggadot can not be assembled into a coherent "picture," and thus the significance of the texts is not found in the many varied images and details employed.

In a similar vein, Solomon Schechter speaks of the many features of the redeemed world of the future described in the aggada, features which he ascribes to "popular fancy." He then says: "We need not dwell on them. There is much in them which is distasteful and childish. Still, when we look at the underlying idea, we shall find that it is not without its spiritual truth."[46] Schechter goes on to express that "truth" in a few short propositions dealing with the significance of poverty in Judaism. It appears that the "theological" approach also leads the scholar to relegate much data to a secondary status in terms of its value.

R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, in a recent article on Jewish Messianism, has expressed the fundamental tenet of the historical approach quite succinctly:

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[45] Moore, Judaism, Vol. II, pp. 323, 389.

[46] Schechter, Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, p. 110.

> For the student of Jewish history the problem of messianic movements is historical rather than purely phenomenological; i.e., the question is . . . one of describing the continuity of messianic belief and expectation as it manifested itself in the events and crises of Jewish history.[47]

In the present study I hope to show that the use of phenomenological method in addition to historical method can aid in the utilization of data which historians, because of their *a priori* assumption, may not fully employ. This use of an additional method should bring out some new and valuable understandings of the Jewish notion of redemption.

In the same article, Werblowsky describes the many catastrophes which are said to precede the final redemption in rabbinic texts, and then adds: "The important point about most of these mythological notions is that they assume a radical discontinuity between our present age and the messianic reign."[48] Here Werblowsky, like the "theologians," has reduced a large number of texts and images to a single proposition in determining their meaning. I hope to show that these different "mythological notions" -- which I call images of chaos -- are more profound and complex than Werblowsky's single focus indicates.

Thus this dissertation aims to supplement (not replace) previous studies of redemption in the aggada by adding a new methodology -- phenomenology -- to the existing methodologies. In this way, it is hoped, an interpretation will be developed which finds religious meaning in the many detailed images of the texts, rather than reducing the religious meaning to single propositions. Ultimately, the aim of this study is to understand the aggadic concept of redemption and its relationship to chaos in greater depth and clarity than the previous secondary studies provide.

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[47] R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, "Messianism in Jewish History," *Jewish Society Through the Ages*, ed. by H.H. Ben-Sasson and S. Ettinger (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), pp. 30-45.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

IV

The term phenomenology as applied to the study of religion has yet to be defined with any precision, and so the term as employed here must be briefly explained. The notion of phenomenology underlying the present study has been largely influenced by the examples of Mircea Eliade,[49] Gerardus van der Leeuw,[50] Joachim Wach,[51] and W. Brede Kristensen.[52] Although each of these scholars understands phenomenology somewhat differently, all share the assumption that religious experience is a form of experience *sui generis* which can not be understood by reduction to any other type of experience. As Mircea Eliade Expresses it:

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[49] For a complete listing of Eliade's important works, see the Bibliography to this dissertation.

[50] Gerardus van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, trans. by J.E. Turner, 2 vols., Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Row, 1963); *Einführung in die Phänomenologie der Religion* (Munich: E. Reinhart, 1925); *Sacred and Profane Beauty: The Holy in Art*, trans. by David E. Green (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1963).

[51] Wach's fundamental theoretical formulations may be found in his *Sociology of Religion*, Phoenix Books (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962 [1st ed., 1944])and the posthumous *The Comparative Study of Religions*, ed. by Joseph M. Kitagawa, Columbia Paperbacks (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1961 [1st ed., 1958]).

[52] Brede W. Kristensen, *The Meaning of Religion*, trans. by John B. Carman (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960).

> "Religious data" have a mode of being that is peculiar to themselves; they exist on their own plane of reference, in their particular universe. The fact that this universe is not the physical universe of immediate experience does not imply their nonreality. (Q,6; emphasis in original)[53]

Thus the phenomenologist attempts to understand what the "religious data" are saying within their own "universe," rather than translating the data into another "universe" (e.g., history, psychology, sociology). A similar point is made by W. B. Kristensen:

> If the historian tries to understand the religious data from a different viewpoint than that of the believers, he negates the religious reality. For there is no religious reality other than the faith of the believers.[54]

While an historian may find his "reality" in the political or social or cultural circumstances which gave rise to a text, for example, the phenomenologist takes the text itself as direct evidence for the religious "reality" embodied in it. He does not attempt to reduce the text's meaning to any kind of historicist interpretation.

In contrast to traditional theological studies, phenomenology suspends judgment on the truth value of the claims of the believers (e.g., as to the existence of the God claimed to be experienced). Ninian Smart discusses this suspension of judgment -- the "epoche" or bracketing:

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[53] Eliade's works are cited by abbreviated title and page number; see List of Abbreviated Titles.

[54] Kristensen, The Meaning of Religion, p. 13.

> But by the principle of the bracket we neither affirm nor deny the existence of the gods . . . . I shall distinguish between objects which are *real* and objects which *exist*. In this usage, God is real for Christians whether or not he exists . . . . The full existence claim is unnecessary to the depiction of their [i.e., the gods'] powerful reality to the participants . . . . The description need not itself import a further theory or set of doctrines as to the truth, rationality, or whatever of this set of beliefs. In brief, the aim of the phenomenologist in his descriptions is to provide, where necessary, what may be called a structure-laden account which is not theory-laden.[55]

Thus phenomenology takes as "real" that which is experienced as real by the religious person, and its task is to provide a coherent account of that reality as it is experienced.

As Smart indicates at the end of the passage just cited, such a coherent account of religious reality is provided by a "structure-laden" phenomenology. That is, phenomenology finds patterns and structures within the data. As Van der Leeuw explains the concept of structure:

> Structure is reality significantly organized . . . . Structure is connection which is neither merely experienced directly, nor abstracted either logically or causally, but which is *understood* . . . . It is timeless and need not actually occur in history. But it possesses life, its own significance, its own law.[56]

Two points in this passage seem to be of particular importance: structure arises from understanding -- not direct experience or abstraction -- and structure is a reality independent of history. Each of these points deserves some elaboration.

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[55] Ninian Smart, *The Science of Religion and the Sociology of Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 54, 73, 58 (emphasis in original). Smart's interpretation of phenomenology is also advanced in *Doctrine and Argument in Indian Philosophy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1964), *Philosophers and Religious Truth* (2d. ed., New York: Macmillan, 1970), and *The Phenomenology of Religion* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973).

[56] Van der Leeuw, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, pp. 672, 673 (emphasis in original).

The process of understanding as Van der Leeuw describes it involves finding some significance in the reality of the data studied. "But the significance, in its own turn, belongs in part to reality itself, and in part to the 'someone' who attempts to understand it."[57] In analyzing the dynamics of this mutuality of understander and understood, the phenomenology of religion may find it helpful to draw on the philosophy of hermeneutics developed by Paul Ricoeur.[58] Ricoeur's recent views on hermeneutic understanding of texts may be summarized in the following passages from his work:

> To interpret is to explicate a sort of being-in-the-world unfolded in front of the text . . . . What is to be interpreted in a text is a proposed world, a world that I might inhabit and wherein I might project my ownmost possibilities.[59]
>
> What has to be interpreted in a text is what it says and what it speaks about; i.e., the kind of world which it opens up or discloses; and the final act of "appropriation" is less the projection of one's own prejudices into the text than the "fusion of horizons" . . . which occurs when the world of the text and the world of the reader

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[57] Ibid., p. 672.

[58] Paul Ricoeur, History and Truth, trans. by Charles A. Kelbley (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965); Le conflit des interprétations (Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1969); "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text," New Literary History, V (Autumn, 1973), 91-117; "Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics," New Literary History, VI (Autumn, 1974), 95-110; Philosophy Today, XVII (Summer, 1973), contains the following: "From Existentialism to the Philosophy of Language," 88-96, "The Task of Hermeneutics," 112-128, and "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation," 129-141.

[59] Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation," 140.

merge into one another.[60]

> What we want to understand is not something hidden behind the text, but something disclosed in front of it. What has to be understood is not the initial situation of discourse, but what points toward a possible world. Understanding has less than ever to do with the author and his situation. It wants to grasp the world-propositions opened up by the reference of the text.[61]

> What the text says now matters more than what the author meant to say, and every exegesis unfolds its procedures within the circumference of a meaning that has broken its mooring to the psychology of the author.[62]

In Ricoeur's view, then, the process of interpreting or understanding a religious text would not have as its goal the recreation of the religious experience of the text's author. Rather, following this methodology, the phenomenologist would claim only to give an account of the meaning or significance of the text itself as he "understands" it. Furthermore, the attempt to understand the text is fundamentally different from the attempt to explain it. While explanation may search for the causes of the text (as in historical explanation) or the internal semantic relationships of the text (as in linguistic and philological explanation), understanding searches for the meaning of the text.[63]

Ricoeur's conception of hermeneutics seems to support

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[60] Ricoeur, "From Existentialism to Philosophy of Language," 93.

[61] Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text," 113.

[62] Ibid., 95.

[63] See "The Model of the Text," for Ricoeur's discussion of the relationship between explanation and understanding. He does point out that "understanding is entirely mediated by the whole of explanatory procedures which precede it and accompany it . . . it is the dynamic meaning released by the explanation." (p. 116; emphasis in original)

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the basically non-historicist approach of phenomenology of religion, as expressed, for example, by Van der Leeuw: "Phenomenology knows nothing of any historical 'development' of religion."[64] Both Ricoeur and Van der Leeuw rule out causal abstraction as a source of phenomenological structure, while the historian seeks reality precisely in the historically-grounded causative factors underlying a text. A similarly non-historicist approach characterizes the work of Mircea Eliade; Eliade's remarks are helpful in characterizing the kind of understanding which phenomenology seeks:

> The discovery, at the beginning of the century, of the importance of history urged many of our contemporaries to reduce man to his historical dimension . . . . But we must not confuse historical circumstances which make a human existence what it actually is with the fact that there is such a thing as human existence . . . . The fact that a myth or a ritual is always historically conditioned does not explain away the very existence of such a myth or ritual. In other words, the historicity of a religious experience does not tell us what a religious experience ultimately is. We know that we can grasp the sacred only through manifestations which are always historically conditioned. But the study of these historically conditioned expressions does not give the answer to the questions: What is the sacred? What does a religious experience actually mean? (Q, 53)
>
> By means of a competent hermeneutics, history of religions . . . becomes what it should have been from the beginning for any investigator: a series of "messages" waiting to be deciphered and understood. The interest in such "messages" is not exclusively historical. They do not only "speak" to us about a long-dead past, but they disclose fundamental existential situations that are directly relevant to modern man. (Q, preface)[65]

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[64] Van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, p. 8.

[65] Eliade's use of the term "history of religions" may be confusing, as he means by it both historical study per se and the kind of understanding which we have assigned to phenomenology. It is the latter which is the recurring focus of Eliade's work.

In Eliade's view, "the 'sacred' is an element in the structure of consciousness, not a stage in the history of consciousness." (Q, preface) The ultimate task of any study of religion is to decipher the meaning of the data, i.e., to give an account of the structures of consciousness or existential situations being expressed. Eliade claims that there is "a spiritual unity subjacent to the history of humanity." (Q, 69) The whole of his work bears testimony to his conviction that the fundamental structures of religious experience recur throughout the history of humanity.

> The hierophanies -- i.e., the manifestations of the sacred expressed in symbols, myths, supernatural beings, etc., -- are grasped as structures, and constitute a pre-reflective language that requires a special hermeneutics . . . . The dialectics of the sacred preceded and served as a model for all the dialectical movements subsequently discovered by the mind. (Q, preface)

The hierophanies, which arise from the dialectics of the sacred (PCR, 12-14), are for Eliade the basic structures which have molded the mind of man; thus they constitute the "spiritual unity." While the historian seeks the causes of particular manifestations of such a structure, the phenomenologist seeks to understand the structure on a universal and "transpersonal" (Q, 6) level. The implication here is that history can not "explain" the fundamental structures of the sacred precisely because those structures, as Van der Leeuw has also claimed, stand outside of the causative effects of time and history.

The present dissertation, then, is phenomenological in that it seeks to understand the texts studied in a basically non-historical manner. Such a method is particularly appro-

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priate here because of the tremendous difficulty in dating the aggadic texts. Even in the present decade, one scholar, summarizing the field of study, could say: "It is nearly impossible to determine with even approximate certainty when a midrash or aggadic work was compiled."[66] And in the cases where a probable dating can be fixed, anonymous or pseudepigraphal passages within the work may pose intractable dating problems. One of the reasons for this difficulty in dating is the striking homogeneity in the aggadic texts. That is, the differentia of form and content which might mark off a late text from an early one are most often minor when compared with the similarities. Similar motifs, the same stylistic usages, and often even the very same words, occur in texts apparently compiled a thousand or more years apart. (The texts used in the present study were probably compiled between the second and twelfth centuries CE, although individual logia may be older.) In terms of the themes being studied here this homogeneity is quite apparent; the same basic motifs occur in nearly every major text, although no one text gives them their full development. As Geza Vermes points out in his historical study: "From the second century onwards, the exegetical tendency was towards elaboration, codification, and compilation, but there was scarcely any new creation."[67]

Given this state of affairs, two alternatives are open at the present: either wait until literary critics can date aggadic texts with some certainty, or else employ a methodology which can deal with the texts in a non-historical way. The latter course is chosen here. Thus the basic structures arising out of the texts are developed here as they appear in the aggadic corpus as a whole. That is, by methodologically disregarding the problem of historical causation, the texts can be studied as a synchronic unity, rather than seeking diachronic cause-and-effect relationships. For this reason, in the present study a ninth century text may be juxtaposed with a second century text to illustrate a certain theme or structure. When the texts can be dated with some certainty, it will be of great interest to study the same structures diachronically, searching for evidence of historical development. But the value of seeing the fully developed structures, which need not ever have existed at a given historical moment, will not be thereby diminished. Further, the results of a phenomenological hermeneutic may be quite valuable to the historian studying the given theme as it appeared in one particular time period.

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[66] Moshe David Herr, "Midrash," Encyclopedia Judaica, 1972, XV, col. 1509.

[67] Geza Vermes, Scripture and Tradition, p. 229.

V

The phenomenological quest for understanding implies, as noted above,[68] that a text is not to be explained causally. Neither is it merely experienced directly; that is, phenomenology cannot remain satisfied with a literal reading of the text. It must go beyond the words of the text to seek the meaning they express. Therefore, phenomenology must take

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[68] See n. 56 above.

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the words of the text as pointing to some reality beyond the text itself.[69] More precisely, the phenomenologist of religion must take the words of a religious text as pointing beyond themselves to the reality of those structures of consciousness which arise in man's encounter with the sacred. Because these structures constitute a "pre-reflective language," they are often paradoxical or inexpressible within the confines of the logic of discursive language. Therefore, men have traditionally sought some means of expressing these realities in non-discursive ways; perhaps the chief of these is the religious symbol. As Gershom Scholem has put it: "A hidden and inexpressible reality finds its expression in the symbol."[70] In Eliade's words: "Perhaps the most important function of religious symbolism . . . is its capacity for expressing paradoxical situations or certain patterns of ultimate reality that can be expressed in no other way."(TO, 205)

Eliade has explained the nature and function of religious symbols as an extension of the phenomenon of hierophany. A hierophany is a manifestation of the sacred in some concrete medium: "A thing becomes sacred in so far as it embodies (that is, reveals) something other than itself." (PCR,13; parentheses in original) Thus in the hierophany a concrete element of man's profane experience points beyond itself to another dimension of reality -- the absolute or sacred dimension.

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[69] See the hermeneutical approach of Ricoeur outlined above.

[70] Gershom G. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism (1st. ed. Jerusalem, 1941; 3d. ed., New York: Schocken Books, 1954; reprinted ed., New York: Schocken Books, 1961).

However, hierophanies are discrete phenomena, localized in time or place (or both). In Eliade's view, man seeks some more unified and permanent relationship with absolute reality than is afforded in single hierophanies. Such a permanent relationship is found in certain hierophanies which recur very frequently within a culture. Because of their repetition and common occurrence they gain wide acceptance as manifesting the sacred in its truest form. "They manifest more clearly, more fully, and with greater coherence what the hierophanies manifest in an individual, local and successive fashion."(PCR, 449) These recurring hierophanies are religious symbols.

In Eliade's theory,

> The majority of hierophanies are susceptible of becoming symbols. But . . . it is not only because it continues a hierophany or takes its place that the symbol is important; it is primarily because it is able to carry on the process of hierophanization and particularly because, on occasions, it is itself a hierophany. It itself reveals a sacred or cosmological reality which no other manifestation is capable of revealing. (PCR, 446, 447)

The symbol can reveal the sacred in a new way because of its function of unifying many hierophanies. That is, each hierophany is discrete, and therefore slightly different from every other hierophany. The symbol provides a fixed form which allows man to see the common element in a recurring series of similar hierophanies. While each hierophany may have a slightly different meaning, the symbol allows all of these meanings to be united in the single form. "This capacity of religious symbolism to reveal a multitude of structurally united meanings has an important consequence: the symbol is capable of revealing a perspective in which diverse realities can be fitted together or even integrated into a 'system.'"(TO, 203)

These complexes of meaning which are unified by the symbol are the fundamental structures in which the sacred is apprehended. "The primitive mind did genuinely have the experience of seeing each hierophany in the framework of the symbolism it implied, and did always really see that symbolic system in every fragment which went to make it up." (PCR, 450) Thus, for example, "the symbolism of the moon makes clear the actual structure of lunar hierophanies." (PCR, 449)

Eliade maintains that the fundamental symbols of man's religious life have continued to function throughout millenia because they have become the fundamental structures of man's concsiousness as he apprehends the world. Every symbol expresses "a complex system of coherent affirmations about the ultimate reality of things . . . a recognition of a certain situation in the cosmos . . . [which] implies a metaphysical position."(CH, 3) Although metaphysical terminology may be lacking in a tradition, Eliade contends, the metaphysical content itself is present. And the elaboration of an explicit philosophical metaphysics is rooted in the fundamental structures established by religious symbols.(PCR, 454) Thus the same "coherent affirmations about the ultimate reality of things" tend to recur in the "trans-consciousness" (i.e., the fundamental structures of the consciousness of man) as in philosophical metaphysics and the individual sub-conscious as well.(PCR, 454) It is only by the phenomenological understanding of symbols that we can attain to these basic structures embedded in religious texts.

This understanding of religious symbolism makes clear the advantage of studying the aggada as a body of religious symbols linked in narrative legend form. Such a study proceeds on the hypothesis that the aggada does indeed point beyond the literal meaning of the text to a series of affirmations about the basic structures by which man experiences absolute reality. While Scholem has been sensitive to this function of symbols in Jewish mysticism,[71] the role of symbols in the aggada has been virtually ignored. It is significant that the index to Heinemann's Darkeî Haʾaggadah -- the most complete study of aggadic methods -- does not even mention the term "symbol" or its equivalent. Yet it seems fair to hypothesize that the aggada does constitute, at least on one level, a huge body of religious symbolism. If this study can provide new understandings of the aggada based on tenable interpretations, then the hypothesis will be confirmed.

One of the great merits of Eliade's work is his compilation of large numbers of symbols which seem to have similar meanings in large numbers of religious traditions. On the basis of this work Eliade has drawn attention to the basic structures which seem to recur in the religious experience of mankind. Thus I have chosen to interpret the aggada in the light of Eliade's work, to see whether the structures which he has analyzed can aid in the understanding of the "patterns of ultimate reality" reflected in the symbolism of the aggada,

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[71] See Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, especially p. 27.

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particularly as they relate to the theme of redemption and chaos. Through a phenomenological understanding of the aggadic symbols one may gain some understanding of the structures of reality to which the aggadic texts point. The interpretation to be offered here is one of many possible contributions to that understanding.

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CHAPTER I

THE ROLE OF CHAOS IN ELIADE'S THEORY OF RELIGION

I

Any analysis of the theory of religion elaborated in the works of Mircea Eliade must begin with the sacred as an irreducible element of human experience. As Eliade himself points out, "All the definitions given up till now of the religious phenomenon have one thing in common: each has its own way of showing that the sacred and the religious life are the opposite of the profane and secular life." (PCR, 1)[1] It is the merit of Eliade's work that he has given perhaps a fuller explication of the notion of "sacred" than any other student of comparative religion. The center of his understanding of religion seems to be a group of conceptual terms which he uses to concretize the notion of the sacred. Foremost among these are the terms "reality" and "being."

> For primitives as for the man of all pre-modern societies, the sacred is equivalent to a power, and, in the last analysis, to reality. The sacred is saturated with being. Sacred power means reality and at the same time enduringness and efficacity. (SP, 12)
>
> The real in archaic ontology is primarily identified with . . . everything that exists most fully or displays an exceptional mode of existence. Sacredness is, above all, real. The more religious a man is the more real he is. (PCR, 459)
>
> Evidently, for the archaic mentality, reality manifests itself as force, effectiveness, and duration.

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[1] See List of Abbreviated Titles for key to citations of Eliade's works.

> Hence the outstanding reality is the sacred; for only the sacred is in an absolute fashion, acts effectively, creates things and makes them endure. (CH, 11)
>
> Religious man can only live in a sacred world because it is only in such a world that he participates in being, that he has a real existence . . . . Religious man thirsts for being. (SP, 64)

To be real, then means to exist in a real manner, to be efficacious and enduring. But how does anything or anyone acquire such reality? Eliade enumerates three ways (CH, 5): by imitating a celestial archetype, by participating in a sacred center, by imitiating the acts of the gods or supernatural beings in the mythic time. The center is sacred because the gods were manifest and therefore created a "world" there, this "world" is created according to the celestial archetypes, and the acts of the gods are obviously divine creations. Thus we may say that, for Eliade, to be real in an absolute sense means to exist by virtue of, or by participating in, a divine creation.

The sacred -- i.e., the really existing -- shows two other prominent characteristics: Life and Cosmos.

> The real in archaic ontology is primarily identified with a "force," a "life," a fertility, an abundance. (PCR, 459)
>
> For the primitive, being reveals itself -- and expresses itself -- in terms of life. (MR, 51)
>
> Inexhaustible life was, in primitive ontology, an expression of the notion of absolute reality. (PCR, 267)
>
> Every religion, even the most elementary, is an ontology; it reveals the being of the sacred things and the divine Figures, it shows forth that which really is, and in doing so establishes a World which is no longer evanescent and incomprehensible, as it is in nightmares, and as it becomes again whenever existence is in danger of foundering, in the "Chaos" of total relativity, where no "Center" emerges to ensure orientation. (MDM, 17)
>
> Every territory occupied for the purpose of being inhabited . . . is first of all transformed from chaos into cosmos; that is, through the effect of ritual it is

> given a "form" which makes it become real. (CH, 11)
> Whatever is perfect, full, harmonious, fertile -- in short, whatever is "cosmicized," whatever resembles a Cosmos -- is sacred. (MR, 32)

Eliade posits an intrinsic inter-relatedness among all these key concepts; each appears to imply all the others, and all are summed up in the notion of the sacred. Real being, real life, and real cosmos all are manifest simultaneously at the moment of divine creative act. Now the paradigmatic example of divine creation, Eliade points out, is the creation of the world itself, the cosmogony. Thus it is not surprising that he finds the moment of creation to be the central moment in the life of religious man.

It may well sound paradoxical to say that the cosmogony, which certainly took place before the birth of any human being, is the central moment in the lives of men living today. But, as Eliade explains in virtually all of his works (cf. especially Cosmos and History), for religious man time is not linear. Through myth, which tells what happened at the time of the cosmogony, and through ritual integrally related to the myth, man can experience the very moment of the creation of the world.

> Myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality . . . . It relates how something was produced, began to be . . . . In one way or another one "lives" the myth, in the sense that one is seized by the sacred, exalting power of the events recollected or re-enacted . . . . Living a myth, then, implies a genuinely "religious" experience. (MR, 4,6,19)

Though not every myth deals with the cosmogony, the cosmogonic myth is the basic pattern which every myth imitates, because the cosmogony is the basic act which every later creation imitates. (cf. MR, Ch.2)

Religious man is always seeking to be in contact with this time of beginning because "Man desires to recover the active presence of the gods; he also desires to live in the world as it came from the Creator's hands, fresh, pure, and strong. It is the nostalgia for the perfection of beginnings that chiefly explains the periodical return _in illo tempore_." (SP, 92) The moment of creation is the moment when the fullness of being, the abundance of life, and the perfection of cosmos are most fully manifest; in other words, _in illo tempore_ (i.e., at that time [of beginnings]) the world was most fully real, and it is this absolute reality that religious man seeks. Such religious nostalgia is motivated chiefly by the attempt to escape from time -- i.e., from becoming and from history -- to the primordial epoch which is atemporal because it preceded the beginning of chronological time.[2]

II

The most pressing question, then, for religious man is what he must do to place himself in the time of beginnings. It is here that myth and ritual have their place as the central techniques of religious experience. But one very important fact, which Eliade has found in virtually all of the religious traditions he has studied, must be introduced at this point: "For the archaic and traditional cultures, the symbolic return to chaos is indispensable to any new Creation." (MDM, 80) "Every ritual repetition of the cosmogony is preceded by a symbolic retrogression to Chaos." (RSI, xiii) Now we have seen that religious man thirsts for being and longs to find himself in a cosmos. Yet chaos, which is equivalent to non-existence, is the prerequisite for slaking that thirst and satisfying that longing. On the personal level there is a similar phenomenon. Religious man seeks abundant life, and yet, "access to spiritual life always entails death to the profane condition." (SP, 201) "Initiatory death is indispensable for the beginning of spiritual life." (RSI, xiv) And initiatory death, as we shall see, is an experience of chaos.

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[2] This theme is developed most fully in _Cosmos and History_.

What, then, is the meaning of chaos and death which makes them indispensable for coming into contact with absolute reality? Let us begin this inquiry by noting that the return to chaos is symbolic. However, this does not mean that it is not truly experienced. Rather, for Eliade, it means just the opposite, because a symbol "is not a replica of objective reality. It reveals something deeper and more fundamental . . . a modality of the real or a condition of the World which is not evident on the plane of immediate experience." (TO, 201) Thus that which is experienced symbolically can be more significant to an individual than that which is "really experienced." Furthermore, "the symbol is capable of revealing a perspective in which diverse realities

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can be fitted together or even integrated into a 'system'." (TO, 203) The experience of a symbol of chaos, therefore, can create an experience of chaos on many levels at once. Another feature of religious symbols is that they themselves seem to cohere in "systems" (cf. PCR, 449). The symbolism of chaos, as elucidated by Eliade, is one of the most striking examples of this.[3]

As previously mentioned, death is comparable on the personal level to chaos on the universal scale. Thus burial in the earth is also a symbol of chaos, as are Hell and the underworld, ghosts and the return of the dead, as well as sleep, silence, and immobility, which imitate death, and circumcision and other self-mutilations which approximate death. Darkness and night are part of the same symbol system, and they are homologous to the womb and the cave or crevice, which are in turn homologous to the primeval ocean, the sea monsters who live in it, the flood which reproduces it, and the baptismal waters which represent it. The womb is also related to the symbol system centering around birth: the seed, the sperm, the hierogamy in which sperm is implanted in the womb, the orgy which imitates the hierogamy, and the embryo and the infant which result, are all homologous to the original chaos. Other symbols of chaos include: demons, wild animals, and enemies, all of which reside in the desert or unsettled land; the primal matter, primordial egg, and primal sacrifice which preceded creation; androgyny and other forms of bisexuality.

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[3] For the following discussion many passages from Eliade have been consulted and synthesized: PCR 160, 190, 194, 251, 261, 356, 381, 399; CH 60, 68, 88; SP 42, 47, 64; TO 92, 113, 115; FC 70, 156; MR 80, 82; RSI xiv, 15, 23, 58; MDM 188; IS 38; Sh 84.

This list is not exhaustive, but it does represent all of the principal symbols of chaos dealt with by Eliade, and it should be stressed that in one place or another he cites each of these as structurally homologous to the whole group. In other words, each is part of the single system, and according to Eliade's theory of symbolism each should be able to evoke all of the others when experienced intensely. There can be no question here of treating all of these symbols thoroughly. But we must examine the more prominent symbols to see what meaning Eliade finds in them, and then make some summary statements at the end.

In nature the principal symbol of chaos is water.

> In water everything is "dissolved," every "form" is broken up, everything that has happened ceases to exist . . . . Water purifies and regenerates because it nullifies the past, and restores -- even if only for a moment -- the integrity of the dawn of things . . . . Water symbolizes the primal substance from which all forms come and to which they will return. (PCR, 194, 188)

In other words, by destroying all forms water reproduces the primal formlessness which preceded the cosmogony, and which must precede every cosmogony. The creation of forms logically demands a prior state of formlessness. That is why every repetition of a creation demands a prior dissolution. In addition, there is the fact that "if forms are not regenerated by being periodically dissolved in water, they will crumble, exhaust their powers of creativity, and finally die away. Mankind would eventually be completely deformed by 'wickedness' and 'sin'." (PCR, 211)

Even though chaos is opposed to cosmos, the dissolution into chaos is not ultimately a negative experience, because it makes possible and is followed by a new creation. As Eliade says, "Contact with water always brings a regeneration -- on the one hand because dissolution is followed by a new birth . . ."; but then he goes on to introduce a new note: " . . . on the other hand because immersion fertilizes and multiplies the potential of life." (SP, 130) This latter point is explained in the very first sentence of Eliade's discussion of water:

> To state the case in brief, water symbolizes the whole of potentiality; it is _fons_ _et_ _origo_, the source of all possible existence . . . container of all seeds . . . . Water is always germinative, containing the potentiality of all forms in their unbroken unity." (PCR, 188)

When cosmic forms are dissolved in water, water can impart its quality of potentiality: "Water is in existence before every creation, and periodically water absorbs it all again to dissolve it in itself, purify it, enrich it with new possibilities and regenerate it." (PCR, 211)

Although the waters are "incapable of transcending their own mode of being, incapable, that is, of manifesting themselves in forms," (SP, 131) they are the potentiality which is actualized in the creation of forms. This would seem to vitiate somewhat the rigid dichotomy between chaos and cosmos, putting the two in a potentiality-actuality relationship. The understanding of this relationship is taken one step further in the assertion that "The Water of Death is preeminently killing: it dissolves, it abolishes all forms. That is just why it is rich in creative 'seeds'." (IS, 158) I take this to mean that by reabsorbing forms the waters have their own potentiality enriched and therefore can in turn give forth new and strong forms again. The relationship between the waters and the forms produced from them thus appears as a cyclical one of potentiality-actuality-potentiality, etc., each contributing to the vitality and ultimately the reality of the other. It is this "enabling" quality of chaos which gives it a positive value.

Yet, for Eliade, the positive value of chaos seems necessarily limited and secondary, because chaos remains the opposite of the real existence which is the sacred.

> Religious man thirsts for being. His terror of the chaos which surrounds his inhabited world corresponds to his terror of nothingness. . . . Profane space represents absolute nonbeing. If, by some evil chance, he strays into it, he feels emptied of his ontic substance, as if he were dissolving in Chaos, and he finally dies. (SP, 64)

And we have seen that in chaos "existence is in danger of foundering" (MDM, 17); cosmicization is the process by which something "is given a 'form' which makes it become real." (CH, 11) The gulf between chaos and the real seems unbridgeable. It is therefore surprising when we follow Eliade's discussion of water one step further and read:

> Life, that is reality, is somewhere concentrated in one cosmic substance from which all living forms proceed, either by direct descent or by symbolic participation. Water animals, particularly fish and sea monsters, become emblems of the sacred because they stand for absolute reality, concentrated in water. (PCR, 192)

There is certainly some unclarity here. Does Eliade mean that chaos is absolute reality in a formless (i.e., potential) state? If so, he would seem to be contradicting his own insistence on the opposition of chaos and real being. Or does he mean rather that chaos is the potentiality for absolute reality? In this case, the radical discontinuity between chaos and reality is allowed to stand. Eliade would seem to embrace the latter view when he says, "The waters cannot pass beyond the condition of the virtual, of germs and latencies. Everything that is form manifests itself above the waters, by detaching itself from the waters." (SP 131) Now the question is: Does absolute reality necessarily entail form as opposed to formlessness? Since all reality is rooted in the creative, form-giving acts of the gods, one would feel forced to answer this in the affirmative. And therefore the gulf between chaos and absolute reality would seem to remain unbridgeable in Eliade's view. But this conclusion is by no means certain, and the problem, having been raised here, is not solved.

The same pattern appears in Eliade's discussion of death.

> The death of the individual and the periodic death of humanity are alike necessary for their regeneration. Any form whatever, by the mere fact that it exists as such and endures, necessarily loses vigor and becomes worn; to recover vigor, it must be reabsorbed into the formless if only for an instant; it must be restored to the primordial unity from which it issued; in other words, it must return to "chaos." (CH, 88)
>
> Every death is at once a reintegration of cosmic night and pre-cosmological chaos . . . . Initiatory death abolishes Creation and History and delivers us from all failures and "sins." (FC, 156)

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Here we have what may be termed the "negative" aspect of chaos; i.e., its function as destroyer of what has preceded in order to prepare the way for a new birth. However, its "positive" contribution is noted by Eliade as well.

> We can talk of the positive value of periods of shadow, of times of large-scale decadence and disintegration . . . . Just as death represents a positive value in itself, so do they; it is the same symbolism as that of larvae in the dark, of hibernation, of seeds bursting apart in the earth so that a new form can appear. (PCR, 184)

Eliade says that in the case of curing disease, "symbolic burial, partial or complete, has the same magico-religious value as immersion in water, baptism. The sick person is regenerated; he is born anew." (SP, 143) In other words, he symbolically goes through the process of dying, becoming a seed, and sprouting from the earth like a plant, full of life. (This is in accord with Eliade's dictum that for traditional man life can not be repaired but must be re-created.) In like manner, the dead man becomes a seed once again (as he was in his mother's womb), so that he too may sprout into some kind of higher life. In its religious valuation, biological death becomes the ultimate initiatory experience.

Traditional societies, Eliade points out, have combined symbols of the highest sacrality with death.

> Only death restores men (and not all of them!) to their primordial condition; only then can they ascend to heaven, fly like birds, and so on. (Sh, 478)
>
> Death, too, is itself sanctified, that is, is charged with a religious value. Death is valuated as an essential moment in the existence of the Supernatural Being. By dying ritually, the initiate shares in the supernatural condition of the founder of the mystery . . . . Concrete death is finally assimilated to a transition rite toward a higher condition. (RSI, 131)

But here again we find a lack of clarity. Is the "higher condition" -- the sacrality of absolute reality -- attained while one is in the condition of death, which is potentiality and non-existence? Or is the new, sacred state reached only after one has somehow transcended the condition of death; i.e., is it a third state to be differentiated from both life and death? Calling death a "transition rite toward a higher condition" would seem to indicate that the latter is true. But on the other hand, "death, too, is itself sanctified," and sanctified means participating in the absolute reality rooted in the acts of the gods. Once more the confusion revolves around the question: Can there be an experience of absolute reality in a state of potentiality? And the problem is not yet resolved.

A form of chaos which Eliade mentions quite often is the social form, which he denotes by the term "orgy." Whenever it is a question of the need for a new creation, it is likely that society will remove the limits and structures which it usually imposes on itself.

> Among the other functions it fulfills in the spiritual and psychological economy of a community, the orgy also makes possible, and prepares the way for, "renewal," the regeneration of life . . . . The presence of the orgy among the ceremonials marking the periodic divisions of time shows the will to abolish the past totally by abolishing all creation. . . . all this is simply to effect the dissolution of the world -- of which the community is a copy -- and to restore the primeval illud tempus which is obviously the mythical moment of the beginning (chaos) . . . (PCR, 359, 399, 400; parentheses in original)

This is a very clear statement of the negative function of chaos; it destroys what has gone before and therefore clears

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the way for what is to come. But the orgy too has its positive function. As was the case with the cosmic waters, the dissolution and merger of old forms increases the potentiality available for a new creation. The meaning of the orgy is

> to recover the original wholeness out of which sprang differentiated Life, and from which the Cosmos emerged. (MDM, 186)
>
> What was emptied of substance is replenished; what was shattered into fragments becomes one again; what was in isolation merges into the great womb of all things. The orgy sets flowing the sacred energy of life. (PCR, 357)

III

So far we see in the orgy the same pattern found in the symbolism of water and of death. As in those cases, the relationship between chaos and absolute reality is rather unclear. But the phenomenon of orgy brings into focus an issue, mentioned only in passing above, which may help to understand Eliade's theory of chaos more fully.

> In the beginning there was -- both on the cosmic and the anthropological scale -- a plenitude containing all potentialities . . . a paradoxical state in which the contraries exist side by side without conflict and the multiplications form aspects of a mysterious Unity. (TO, 115, 122)
>
> [In the orgy] one finds a ritual "totalisation," a reintegration of opposites, a regression to the primordial and homogeneous. It is in fact a symbolic restoration of "Chaos," of the undifferentiated unity that preceded the Creation. (TO, 114)
>
> However one may conceive the absolute, it can not be conceived except as beyond contraries and polarities. This is the reason why India includes the orgy among the means of attaining deliverance, while deliverance is denied to those who continue to follow the ethical rules depending on social institutions. (Q, 169)

The orgy represents man's principal opportunity to experience intensely and in the flesh the primordial unity, which is a

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prime characteristic of absolute reality as it was in the beginning. In returning to a cosmic, rule-bound existence man is giving up this unity and returning to the world of multiplicity and differentiation. Eliade affirms that man experiences his separation from other aspects of reality with sadness and longs for that state of unity which existed in the beginning but was lost (cf. TO, 122).

A good example of this phenomenon is the ritual orgy of the Dayak tribe: "While waiting for a new creation the community lives near the godhead, more exactly lives in the total primeval godhead. The orgiastic character of the interval between the years ought not to obscure its sacrality." (Q, 80) First, let us note that the orgy is linked to living "in" the primeval godhead, the source of new creation. In general, says Eliade,

> When we have to do with Creators, with Urheber, it seems that the emphasis falls on their capacity to create, and this capacity is felt as an undifferentiated plenitude, otherwise unspecified. One might call this state a neuter and creative wholeness. (MDM, 179)

Here we see that the undifferentiated unity, the chaos which precedes all creation, is also the source of that creation. The idea of the primordial totality as potentiality is further emphasized: "Every creation springs from an abundance. The gods create out of an excess of power, an overflow of energy." (SP, 97) In experiencing chaos, the Dayak are experiencing not real existence but rather the source of all that will ever exist in the future. It is this which gives the experience its sacrality.

Eliade has studied this experience of primordial unity, and the coincidentia oppositorum which often engenders such an experience, especially in his essay "Mephistopheles and the Androgyne" (TO, Ch. 2). In that essay he stresses that all polarities and all oppositions are reconciled in the primordial "grund" -- the source of all creation. And this union of opposites appears to extend even to the ultimate opposition, that between chaos and cosmos. Since this point will have some importance later in our study, it deserves closer examination here. In Vedic mythology, Eliade notes, the dragon Vritra, representative of chaos, and the cosmicizing hero Indra who slays the dragon are said to be brothers. Vritra and Indra represent the two classes of divinities, the Asuras and Devas, and:

> The 'secret" Vedic history reveals, on one side, the blood brotherhood of the Devas and Asuras, the fact that these two classes of superhuman being sprang from one and the same principle; and, on the other, it makes clear the coincidentia oppositorum in the deep nature of the divinities who are, by turns or simultaneously, benevolent and terrible, creative and destructive, solar and ophidian (that is to say manifest and virtual), etc. One recognizes the effort of the Indian spirit to reach a standpoint from which contraries are resolved and contradictions abolished . . . . Clearly, this is only true from a transcendental and timeless viewpoint; in man's immediate experience, in his concrete, historical existence, the Devas and Asuras are opposed . . . . What is true of eternity is not necessarily true in time. (TO, 94; parentheses in original, emphasis added)

In discussing Hesiod's Theogony, Eliade says that Chaos, Erebus, and Night "are mythical statements of the primal totality, containing all powers, therefore all pairs of opposites: chaos and form, darkness and light, the virtual and the manifest, male and female, etc." (TO, 108)

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> Zervan, the Persian god of boundless time, was androgynous, as was also the supreme Chinese divinity of Darkness and Light. These two examples clearly show us that androgyny was the particular expression of totality. For, as we have seen, Zervan was the father of the twins Ohrmazd and Ahriman, the gods of Good and Evil -- and Darkness and Light, in China as in India, symbolize the *manifest* and *unmanifest* aspects of ultimate reality. (TO, 110-111; emphasis added)

Finally, in concluding the essay, Eliade says: "The mystery of totality embodies man's endeavour to reach a perspective in which the contraries are abolished, the Spirit of Evil reveals itself as a stimulant of Good, and Demons appear as the *night* aspect of the Gods." (TO, 122-123; emphasis added)

From the "viewpoint" of the precosmogonic primordial situation, then, the distinction between chaos and cosmos is non-existent. For man, however, living in the created world, an effort is needed to attain this "transcendent viewpoint" even for a short time. And it appears that for many peoples, like the Dayak, the experience of chaos serves effectively as a means to reach this experience of *coincidentia oppositorum*. Here Eliade has described a third central function of the experience of chaos in man's religious life. Let us return to the example of the Dayak now, and note that in their orgy they are "waiting for a new creation"; the orgy takes place in an "interval beyween the years." In general, according to Eliade, the attainment of the primordial unity is only a temporary experience; the cycle of existence-dissolution-new existence is always continued: "One cannot stop in any one of these three moments, one cannot install one-

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self anywhere . . . . The movement -- the regeneration -- always continues." (MDM, 226)

Seeing the experience of coincidentia oppositorum as an integral part of this cyclic process, we can perceive a necessary relationship among the three functions of chaos in Eliade's work. The distinct forms of the cosmos and the polarities inherent in them are "dissolved" -- i.e., unified into an undifferentiated whole -- in the experience of chaos. Thus the precosmogonic situation is reestablished. Now it is precisely this precosmogonic grund which contained all possibilities and therefore enabled creation to take place in the beginning. Thus it must be re-established in order to provide the potentiality for every new beginning. Since every ending -- every death -- is "at once a return to cosmic night and precosmological chaos," (FC, 156) every ending is necessarily the source of a new beginning. In sum, it is precisely because chaos is the means by which man experiences the coincidentia oppositorum that chaos bears its two other functions -- dissolving the old creation and providing the potentiality for the new.

Thus far, it would seem that Eliade has developed a coherent and consistent theory of chaos as an element of religious experience. And the pivotal factor in this theory is that the experience of chaos is an experience of the primal unity which contains all potentialities and precedes all actualized existence. In fact, it would appear that the central and defining feature of chaos for Eliade is its potentiality, as opposed to cosmos which always implies actualized existence. However, this conclusion raises again a problem left unresolved earlier in this chapter. Here Eliade is positing the experience of pure potentiality in chaos as man's most immediate experience of absolute reality in itself. The Dayak "live in the godhead" and have a "sacral" experience. Yet we have seen that Eliade equates the sacred with absolute reality and with cosmos, while chaos is said to represent nonbeing and the profane. "Whatever is 'cosmicized' . . . is sacred." (MR, 32) There is still a lack of clarity here.

IV

What is the significance of this lack of clarity? Were Eliade merely trying to describe the role of chaos in various aspects of man's life in various cultures, it would have little significance. In fact, he has successfully identified and amply documented three functions of chaos -- it "dissolves" an existing situation, returns man to the primordial situation of coincidentia oppositorum, and provides the potentiality for the creation of a new situation (a new cosmos) -- and he has shown the intrinsic inter-relatedness of these three functions. The problem, however, is that Eliade has attempted in his work to go beyond description and provide a single theory to explain man's religiosity in all of its varied manifestations. To do this he must answer the question: "Can there be an experience of chaos -- potentiality -- and absolute reality simultaneously?" At times

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Eliade's answer is clearly in the affirmative; at other times, and it seems to me in the majority of cases, his answer is negative because he opposes cosmos as sacred to chaos as profane. In one sense, this lack of a unified theory is an advantage, because it allows Eliade to deal with individual symbols of chaos in their indigenous contexts, without forcing them into a single theoretical schema. And thus he can provide an outstanding analysis of the various modalities of the symbolism of chaos in religion. But the desire for a unified understanding of world and self may well drive us to seek a single answer to the question which Eliade seems to leave unanswered.

Turning to the rabbinic aggada in the following chapters, I shall show that all of the individual functions of chaos as delineated by Eliade are abundantly attested in the texts dealing with redemption. Further, I hope to show that the aggada does in fact have a unified understanding of the place of chaos in Jewish religious experience, an understanding which it expresses through precisely those symbols of chaos which have been studied by Eliade.

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CHAPTER II

THE REDEEMED WORLD OF THE FUTURE

As the previous chapter indicated, the relationship of chaos to absolute reality is reflected in the relationship of chaos to the new creation which follows it, because that new creation is the fullest manifestation of absolute reality. To understand the religious significance of chaos we must first understand the religious significance of the new creation -- the paradisal state. Now in the aggada, too, absolute reality is most fully manifest in the paradisal state following the act of redemption; i.e., in the redeemed state. Thus, before comparing the symbols of chaos in Eliade and the aggada, we must devote a chapter to the symbols of the redeemed world in the aggada. This chapter has three important purposes. First, it will establish the high degree of compatibility between Eliade and the aggada on the matter of paradisal experience -- particularly the centrality of cosmic order and plenitude of life in both. This will serve to strengthen the validity of using Eliade as a methodological basis for studying aggada. It will show that Eliade, in talking about the experience of absolute reality, and the aggada, in depicting the paradise of the redeemed world, use largely the same symbols and conceptual themes.

Second, this chapter will give a detailed picture of the "shape" of the future redeemed world in the aggada

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and the many particular symbols used to delineate it. When, in following chapters, we study the redeemed state of the past, a comparison with the present chapter will indicate clearly that there is a single conception of redemption in the aggada; both the same types of religious experience and the same specific symbols will reappear in studying the paradisal state of the past. Since students of "the Jewish idea of redemption" have concentrated almost solely on the future redemption, the parallel between past and future can not be assumed; it must be proven in great detail so that we can be justified in talking about the unity of the redemptive experience in the aggada.

Third, the present chapter will begin to introduce the idea of a simultaneous experience of chaos and absolute reality in the paradisal state, although here the effective power of chaos to produce change is largely negated.

Unfortunately I can present here only a small fraction of the total material available on the future redeemed world; however, I do believe that the material studied in this chapter gives an accurate reflection of the religious significance expressed in all the texts which I have studied. I have tried to cite Eliade in the body of this chapter only where there is specific textual evidence in the aggada to support his interpretations of individual symbols and motifs; again, the aim is to illustrate the correspondence between Eliade and the aggada as accurately as possible. However, in addenda to several of the sub-sections (marked with the sub-section number followed by the letter "E"), and in footnotes, I have added material from Eliade which seems plausible and useful in understanding the texts, although there is no specific correlative textual evidence.

1. In the redeemed world of the future there will be a tremendous increase in the earth's fertility: "In the future the earth will be sown and will produce fruits on the very same day."(1)[1] In a more moderate opinion, God "will make the trees give their fruit every month."(2) In either case, the process of growth will be tremendously accelerated and there will be an abundance of food. Furthermore, each plant will be of enormous size: "Every grain of wheat will be as big as the two kidneys of a large ox."(3) "Every vine in the Messianic age will need at least the population of one entire city to harvest it."(4) And the earth's fertility will be increased everywhere. To the text, "The earth which God will create in the future will bring forth trees and all kinds of choice fruits," the editor[2] adds the explanation, "This means the ground throughout the entire world." (5) Even the Dead Sea valley, the archetype of arid and barren land, will be a fertile garden. (MHG 5,4)[3] This widening of fertility applies to individual plants as well:

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[1] Numbers in parentheses refer to passages cited in Hebrew in the Appendix.

[2] The term "editor" in this study refers to the editor of the modern edition of the text. However, the editor's explanatory comments are usually based on traditional commentaries from the medieval and early modern periods.

[3] See List of Abbreviated Titles for key to titles of aggadic sources.

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"Every barren tree which has never borne fruit will bear enough fruit so that two asses will be needed to carry it." (6) Not only is food abundantly available everywhere; it is available to all without any effort. "In the future God will give to everyone everything that he asks for."(SR 25.3) The mechanics of the process are described: "The wheat plants will rub against each other and the flour will fall to the ground, and you will go and take as much as your hands can hold for your sustenance."(7) Thus man is free from the need to work in order to eat his fill.

In sum, we can say that whatever man encounters of religious significance in the life of plants, he will encounter it much more intensely in the redeemed state. However, the aggada goes beyond this -- man shares in and participates in this enhanced fertility directly: "In the future every Israelite will have children every day -- an inference based on the example of the hen."(8)[4] "In the future everyone will have a number of children equal to the number of those who left Egypt."(9) The frequency and magnitude of birth in the human world equals that in the plant world. The idea that men and plants share in the single force of universal fertility[5] is further shown in the aggada by depicting people as plants: "In the future I [God] will plant them [Israel] in a true planting, so that they will never be plucked from their soil."(10) "The righteous will sprout and rise in Jerusalem, as it is written, 'And they will sprout from the city like grass from the earth.'"(11)[6] We may note in this passage that Jerusalem is linked especially with this enhanced fertility, and the aggada sees the Temple in particular as a source of tremendous fertility: "Just as the bed is only for being fruitful and multiplying, so everything that was in the Temple was fruitful and multiplied." (Tan. Naśo̓)

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[4] The latter clause of this passage indicates that it is meant to apply to women as well as men.

[5] The same idea is reflected in what Eliade calls the "mystical bonds between men and trees." (PCR, 267)

1E. Eliade's understanding of fertility as a religious symbol is summed up succinctly in these words: "The plant world embodies (or signifies, or shares in) the reality of which life is made . . . . The forces of plant life are an epiphany of the life of the whole universe." (PCR, 324, 325; parentheses in original) Thus the intensification of the force of life in the vegetative realm symbolizes an intensification of the power of life in the universe itself, one of the prime expressions of absolute reality. In the periodic return to life of the plant world man sees the return of reality itself, and he participates in this newly-born reality through the work of agriculture.(PCR, Ch.9) In this view, the idea of harvesting a new crop every day, or even every month, means that man is in constant contact with the force of life at its most powerful. And this force -- this vitality of the cosmos -- manifests itself everywhere, ac-

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[6] The process of redemption in the future, not treated here, is also likened to the blooming of plants.

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cording to the aggada. Eliade also maintains that "by means of his food, man participates in a higher reality." (TO, 157) Thus the plenitude of food in the paradisal state (which Eliade finds to be a mark of paradise in virtually every tradition) is symbolic of a "spiritual plenitude" (CH, 91),[7] a fullness of life freely available to all.

The idea that the barren areas of the earth will be cultivated is taken up by Eliade in the context of cosmicization: "By cultivating the desert soil, they in fact repeated the acts of the gods, who organized chaos by giving it forms and norms."(CH, 10) We shall see that the aggada does generally equate the wilderness and desert with chaos, while the settled and cultivated land is symbolic of cosmos. But in the aggada it is not a question of imitating the divine act; rather it is a divine act that occurs. God Himself makes the chaos into cosmos by creating a new earth which is fertile everywhere. With this one alteration, I believe that Eliade's understanding of plant fertility is applicable to the aggada. Unless one wants to say that the abundance of food in the paradisal state expresses only the aggadists' economic aspirations,[8] it seems obvious that these aggadot do refer to an intensification and permanence of that vital force through which absolute reality endows

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[7] On the concept of the "spiritual" and "spiritualization" in Eliade's work, cf. Part IV of Chapter V of this dissertation.

[8] I endorse Eliade's opposition to this form of "banalization" (TO, 156).

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all living things -- including man[9] -- with the power of life.

The theme of "nourishment" as a symbol of absorbing this cosmic vitality will appear again in discussing the symbolism of light, the manna, and other motifs. In all these cases it is apparent that the redeemed man receives more than physical nourishment, for the life force he experiences is a direct manifestation of the redeeming act of God. And we have seen that the people of the redeemed world exhibit this intensification of life in their own heightened fertility. Finally, we may note that both the tremendous enhancement of life itself and the extension and enhancement of cosmic order are expressed in the one motif of increased fertility; for Eliade these are two of the principal characteristics of absolute reality itself.

2. The archetype of the redeemed world is the Garden of Eden. Now the Garden is identified with the sacred center -- its gate is found within the Temple (PM 340), or at least next to the Temple mountain (MT 92.6; PRE 45b). Eliade frequently mentions that the sacred center connects heaven and hell, and an early aggada supports this idea: when Moses was on Sinai, God "showed him the place of the Garden of Eden . . . [and] showed him the place of Gehinom next to it." (12) This proximity is brought out in a description of the final judgment:

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[9] The aggada's stress on resurrection and immortality as a key aspect of redemption tends to reinforce the importance of this experience of life.

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> [God] issues a decree concerning all of the righteous and the wicked and they go up to Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden by the single road which leads to both of them . . . . As soon as they arrive there God puts the righteous into the Garden of Eden, but he diverts the path of the wicked and leads them to Gehinom. (13)

Without a doubt the division between those who follow the law and those who do not is quite definite. But the idea that there is some connection between their final abodes (symbolic of cosmos and chaos, respectively) remains. And this connection seems to reside in the sanctity of the place (the center) which joins them. Later on we shall examine the meaning of Gehinom in the aggada, including the belief that it is situated in Jerusalem, but for now we will focus on the Garden.

Not only is it located at the cosmic center, but it forms a microcosmos itself. "Just as the firmament is made of row upon row of stars, so the Garden of Eden is made of row upon row of the righteous, who illuminate it like the stars."(14) The Garden has seven gates (MD 227), and in rabbinic cosmology there are ordinarily just seven heavens. The following description seems to be an abstract picture of a perfect cosmos: "One fountain of living waters emerges from under the Tree of Life; it is divided into four parts . . . and all of them circumscribe the Garden from one end to the other."(15) The image of quaternity, patterned on the four cardinal points which proceed from the center, is repeated in a mystical aggada which tells of "four rings in the four ends of the firmament with four wheels in each of the rings." (SGE I 54)

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Although there are many different descriptions of the Garden, all have an image of abstract order, usually based on sets of three, four, or seven. Since we have seen the relationship of order and fertility, it is not surprising that "in the Garden of Eden there are 800,000 kinds of trees in every corner, and the least of them is finer than any spice tree on earth."(16) "Noah found a vine which was sent out of the Garden of Eden with bunches of grapes still upon it . . . . He planted a vineyard from it in the earth, and on the very same day its fruits ripened."(17) These aggadot seem to indicate that the fertility of the earth is somehow only a derivative of, and inferior to, the Garden's fertility.[10] Thus everything said above about the meaning of fertility is even more true about these descriptions of the Garden of Eden.

Yet the Garden itself is not the center or source of the life power experienced in the redeemed state. It has its own center, which the aggada, in conformity with a nearly universal conception (cf. PCR, Ch. 8), symbolizes by a tree. "The Tree of Life is in the middle, and its body spreads over all of the Garden of Eden." (SGE I 53) The tree is also called a pillar (as in many of Eliade's sources), "and this pillar is in the middle of the Garden from top to bottom, and from it are drawn everything good in the Garden and all of its delights." (SGE II 139) Furthermore, "its

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[10] See section 4 of this chapter for the grape as the fruit which is particularly symbolic of abundant life.

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odor wafts from one end of the universe to the other."(SGE I 53) The tree, then, is clearly a source of life for the Garden. In addition, it completes the image of the Garden as a cosmos: "Just as the sphere of the sun is placed in the middle of the firmament, so is the Tree of Life placed in the middle of the Garden of Eden."(18)

The idea that the Tree is the source of all life is shown by the explanation of its name; it is called the Tree of Life "because it spreads over all the living."(21) Furthermore, the Tree is explicitly said to be a symbol of man's immortality in the future world. The aggada tells of six supernatural gifts taken from Adam which will be returned in the future, and asks, "How do we know about his life [i.e., immortality]? 'For as the days of the tree are the days of my people.'" (BR 12.6) Man's direct participation in the reality of the Tree of Life is symbolized by the idea that in the future "just as the fruit is eaten, so even the tree is eaten."(Sifraʾ, B'ḥuqotaî 1) "The question is asked: Why was the Tree of Life created? The answer is, so that the righteous might eat it in the World to Come in the Garden of Eden and live forever."(Leqaḥ Gen. 2.9) Moreover, the trees of the future world are all medicinal and restore man to perfection.[11] In sum, the Tree of Life symbolizes not only the perfect cosmos of the redeemed world, but also

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[11] This is one of the important and widely-developed symbolic motifs which could not be discussed in this chapter merely because of limitations of space. Its significance will be touched on in the following chapters.

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the immediate experience of ultimate reality and the plenitude of life which comes directly from God.

2E. The tree may also be an image of the cosmos in itself. Eliade (PCR, 273-278) discusses the "cosmic tree"; i.e., the tree which symbolizes the reality and life of the cosmos itself. This tree is often depicted as being upside-down. One aggadic passage says that the Tree of Life "has its roots in the Lebanon, and they [the roots] are the Throne of Glory . . . and its roots are 72 roots planted in the House of God and the branches are 42 and all of the princes of the world hang from them."(19)[12] This passage gives a clue to the meaning of the upside-down tree. Just as the Garden draws its being from a source -- the Tree -- so the Tree in turn must draw its being from a source, which is the source of all reality itself, God. The tree must be upside-down, since it draws its reality through its roots, and God is located above. The tree -- like the Temple -- is sacred only because it shares in and symbolizes the presence of God at the sacred center. We shall see that the living waters of the redeemed world come from the Temple, but let us note that they also come from the Tree of Life: "All the primeval waters are divided into streams underneath it."(20)

3. As the preceding chapter showed, any discussion

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[12] The numbers in this passage probably have significance in the mystical tradition. Seventy-two clearly refers to the 72 letters in the full name of God. The same reference appears in the 72 pearls which hang above the heavenly Jerusalem (cf. section 7 below).

concerned with chaos and cosmos must pay attention to the symbolism of water. The essential thing about the waters of the future world is that they come from the Temple (or from the Tree of Life); i.e., from the center. "God will bring forth a stream from the Holy of Holies and upon it will grow all sorts of choice fruits."(22) "All the waters of creation will emerge [from the Temple] as from the mouth of a jar."(23) "And they emerge and become twelve streams, parallel to the twelve tribes."(23A)[13] This water has great power; it can cure disease (SR 15.21), it can make the ocean water sweet (PR 156b; this is symbolic of cosmos overcoming chaos), it brings the tremendous fertility of the future world: "All the vineyards and fields which produce no fruit are watered by those waters and they produce fruit."(24) "It descends to the Dead Sea to increase fish for Israel."(PM 339) The following passage tells of rivers coming not from the Temple, but from the mountains, which are also symbolic of a sacred center (cf. section 9, end): "How wonderful are the mountains of the Land of Israel which pour out milk and honey like flowing rivers of water, and also rivers of wine."(25) The theme of rivers of different substances is more prominent in descriptions of the Garden of Eden: "Four rivers are poured out and emerge from the Garden of Eden -- one of wine and one of honey and one of milk and one of balsam."(26) The four rivers are often said to emerge from

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[13] It is probable that the twelve tribes are the symbol of ideal order on the societal plane (cf. the discussion of the Well in Chapter V below).

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each of the canopies set up for the righteous. (PR 163a; K'tapuaḥ 285)[14]

Let us return to Eliade's view of the positive value of water: "Living water, the fountains of youth, the Water of Life, and the rest, are all mythological formulae for the same metaphysical and religious reality: life, strength, and eternity are contained in water . . . spring and river display power, life, perpetual renewal; they are and they are alive." (PCR, 193, 200) The aggada expresses all of these values of water, but it does not let us forget that water is the symbol of pure potentiality; the waters which come from the Temple "rise above the level of the stream until a man can not pass because the waters have risen so much."(27) This seems to be the image of a flood. Another interesting passage quotes the righteous in the world to come as saying, "This world [the world to come] is like the sea and the world you came from is dry land . . . . This world is like the desert and the world you came from is like settled land."(28)

But despite these exceptions, water in the future world is overwhelmingly a force of fertility and order. Its power to dissolve the existing order appears to be negated. How does the aggada make the jump from a symbol of chaos to its opposite? I would suggest as one answer that the waters here are always depicted as rivers -- i.e., bounded

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[14] The canopies serve as sort of "miniature firmaments" for each individual, and thus they too symbolize the source of cosmic order; cf. passage (37) below.

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and channeled into a particular course -- after they come out of the sacred center. Emerging from the center seems to be equivalent to an act of cosmicization. In the act of creation, God sets limits on pure potentiality and thereby actualizes it, allowing man to benefit from it. In the future world those benefits are experienced in an immediate way and on a large scale, because the waters come directly from the source of absolute reality. Perhaps the idea that the world to come is like the sea indicates the intensity of the religious experience; being and life are present in such plenitude that it seems as if no limit has been placed on them.

4. Of the four rivers of Eden, the substances of two are especially important to the aggada: wine and balsam (i.e., spice). "God gives Israel four cups of salvation to drink in the future."(29) "God brings them the wine which has been kept since the six days of creation."(PM 342) As Eliade mentions, wine is a symbol of youth and immortality (PCR, 285), and our first text explicitly equates it with salvation. The fact that this wine is from the very first days of creation reinforces the idea that the future world is a paradisal epoch in Eliade's sense -- a time immediately following the moment of creation. But wine is also a symbol of wisdom (cf. Eliade, *ibid*.); thus the following: God says to the righteous, "Drink the wine which was kept in its grapes since the six days of creation, because you concerned yourselves with the Torah, which is compared to wine." (SGE

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I 52)[15] The theme of supernatural wisdom and perfect knowledge of the law, which we shall see more fully later on, is directly linked to immortality and the plenitude of life.

The theme of fragrant odors is not treated by Eliade, as far as I know. But it is of some importance in the aggada and so should be discussed. The righteous in the Garden of Eden bathe in the rivers of balsam each day, and afterwards sing a song of praise to God. (BHM V 42) "When God enters the Garden of Eden with the righteous, the Tree of Life gives off an odor, and that odor pervades the entire Garden, and that odor is life for all the righteous who are there."(30) Here we have an explicit indication of the meaning of fragrance. "When Solomon built the Temple the whole world was pervaded with the fragrance of spices"(31), and God assures him that it will be restored in the future. The Temple represents not only life, but the order of the cosmos and in a sense its very being, and thus all these themes are connected with spices and fragrance.

Moreover, the fragrances of Eden are distinguished from those of the earth: "The righteous in the future will need neither balsam nor any kinds of spices; a north wind blows and brings all the spices of the Garden of Eden before them."(32) Thus the fragrances of the future represent a purely spiritual environment, as symbolized by the Garden.

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[15] The mystical interpretation of this text would stress the link between wine and wisdom even more, since that tradition holds the Torah to be the sole repository of all wisdom; see G.G. Scholem, On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism, trans. R. Manheim, (New York: Schocken Books, 1965), Ch. 2, especially pp. 62-65; see also M.ʾAbot 5, 25.

The great power of these spices is shown by their effect on the mythical beast Leviathan: "If it were not that he puts his head into the Garden of Eden, no creature could stand his foul odor."(33) It appears that Leviathan, like the Behemoth who "plays every day in the Garden of Eden before the Creator"(33A), has some place in the cosmic scheme of Eden. The fragrances may be forces of cosmos which overcome the powers of chaos and allow them to be incorporated into the paradisal state.

5. One of the outstanding symbols of the future world is light. In the future night is changed to day (SR 18.11); "'All the days' -- this is the world to come which is entirely day."(BR 91.10) "'To tell of your faithful love in the morning' -- to all those in the world to come which is like the morning -- 'and your steadfastness at night' -- to all those in this world which is like the night."(34) The significance of morning is perhaps made clearer in the well-known aggada that the light of creation (the first light, which preceded the creation of the sun) is hidden away for the righteous in the world to come (BR 3.6); in the Messianic age "the light of the six days of creation will return and will be seen."(MD 225) The light of the future is the light of dawn -- the cosmogonic light -- bringing order to the world: "And even Jerusalem in the future every morning its judgment will go out and see the light of day."(35) Jerusalem, the center of the world, is itself a source of light, for "in it are 72 pearls which shine from one end of the

world to the other."(NRSY 196) In addition, when God kills Leviathan and makes canopies for the righteous from his skin,[16] "God spreads the remainder over the walls of Jerusalem, and its light shines from one end of the world to the other." (TB B.B. 75a) Here the archetype of chaos has been transformed and incorporated into the archetype of cosmos. Several other sources of light are mentioned. The Garden of Eden is light because "six mirrors of light surround it, and the sixth light is like a river which goes out and enters into the Garden and from there is separated into four sources."(36) Here there is a conjunction of light and river symbolism. The canopies of the righteous are miniatures of Jerusalem: "Each canopy has above it a vine of gold, and 30 pearls hang from it, and each one shines with a light as bright as Venus."(37)[17] However, of the several walls in Eden which give off light, "the third wall is made of light mixed with darkness."(38)

Not only will the righteous see pure light in the future, but they will be light themselves: "Lightning-bolts of fire come out of their mouths and horns of glory are on their heads, and their light shines from one end of the world to the other."(39) "In the future they will be like the stars; just as the stars shine in the firmament, so will they

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[16] This motif also illustrates the incorporation of chaos into cosmos, thereby negating the force of chaos; cf. n. 14 above and passage (37) below on the canopies.

[17] This passage illustrates the complex overlapping of symbols; at least six separate motifs appear in it. Its appearance in this section is relatively arbitrary and does

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be in the future: 'The enlightened will shine like the shining of the firmament.'"(PR 45b) An early source is more detailed: "Seven classes of righteous will greet the Šekînah [i.e., God's presence] in the future, and their faces will be like the sun, the moon, the firmament, the lightning, the stars, the lily, or the menorah[18] which stands in the Temple." (M. Tanna'îm I 9) Thus the righteous themselves resemble the cosmos, and since the heavenly bodies which are visible signs of order give off light, the righteous will give off light too.

If we now ask what the ultimate source of this light is, we find a single answer: "The light of the Šekînah is upon their faces."(MG 349) God tells Israel, "I will not make it necessary for you to see by the light of the sun, but I Myself in My glory will give your light."(40) In the Messianic age, the Šekînah will appear as a pillar of fire, and "that light is greater than the light of the sun and the moon so that it dims both of them."(41) The righteous are infused with this light, so that "in the future the sun will be ashamed and the moon humiliated by the magnitude of the light of the righteous."(42)

Eliade has discussed light (TO, 75-77) as a symbol of pure spirituality, and illumination as a symbol of passing from corporeality to spirituality. Certainly in these texts

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not imply that the other motifs included in it are not equally important.

[18] A ritual candelabrum which stood in the Temple.

such a meaning is clear and important; although the degree of corporeality in the future world varies from text to text, it is in every case much more spiritualized than the present world. But light here carries more specific meanings. We have seen its connection with cosmicization. It also represents the plenitude of life. Israel says to God: "Because of the Torah which You called a fountain of life, I will in the future delight in your light."(PR 161a) "Everyone who makes use of the light of the Torah is given life by the light of the Torah."(43) Light, which is the least corporeal of corporeal substances, is taken here as a symbol of the "essence" of God (if one can say such a thing) as He manifests Himself (i.e., the Šekînah). And the righteous are infused with this "essence" so that they participate directly in the pure being which comes from God. That this participation is a source of spiritualized life is shown by the statement that in the world to come there is no eating or drinking; in place of earthly alimentation the righteous "sit with their crown on their head and are nourished by the light of theŠekinah."(44) All of these symbolic significations are summed up in one passage: "Israel said before God: Master of the Universe, whenever you bring light into the world Your name is enhanced. And what is the light? Redemption."(45)

6. The heavenly bodies play an important role in the future world; even though God's light makes them seem dim, their own light is greatly increased: "In the future God

will renew all the hosts of the heaven and add to their light a seven-fold light."(46) By mathematical exegesis the magnitude was increased: "He will change their light [i.e., of the sun and moon] and make it 49 [7^2] times as great." (M. Tannaîm II 181); "In the future God will add to the light of the sun a light 343 [7^3] times as great as its present light."(MG 343) We saw above the significance of the heavenly bodies as symbols of cosmic order; this seems to be especially true of the stars: "In the future the sun and moon will be ashamed but the stars will have no shame."(47)[19] We have seen that the righteous are compared to the stars ([14] and PR 45b above). In particular, the peace which arises from cosmic harmony is stressed: "Just as among the stars there is neither enmity nor jealousy nor competition, so among the righteous."(Sifre Dt. 47)

The heavenly bodies as symbols of order are applied especially to the monarchical figures of the future world: "'The sun will shine and they will move away:' When the sun of the Messiah shall shine the nations of the world will move away."(49) To the passage "Then Hepzibah [the Messiah's mother] will go out . . . with a star shining before her" the editor adds the comment, "The star of her son the Messiah son of David, to whom is referred the passage 'The path of a star from Jacob.'"(SZ 78) A passage from a vision of the future world says: "I saw one crown different from all the others, with the sun and the moon and twelve stars fixed in it. I said, 'For whom is this magnificent crown?', and he answered me, 'For David the king of Israel.'"(MG 9) David wears the entire cosmos, as it were, in a symbolic way upon his head.

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[19] I take this to mean that the stars will not be outshone by God's light, and this tremendous intensification of the stars' light symbolizes a greater ordering and securing of the cosmos.

The sun is symbolic of cosmic order, but its connection with disorder is also noted by the aggada: "There is no hell in the world to come, but God takes the sun out of its sheath -- the righteous are cured by it and the wicked are punished by it."(50) The sun creates both cosmos and chaos simultaneously, depending on who experiences it. But the chaos it produces is ultimately a means of cosmicization; the healing power of the sun in the future is dominant: "If there is any sick man God decrees to the sun and it heals him."(51)[20]

In Eliade's view, the moon is also a symbol which expresses a relationship between chaos and cosmos. Although it dies each month and disappears into apparent non-being, it is always born again.(SP, 156, 157) The aggada[21] expresses the same idea: "Israel is like the moon -- just as God never lets the moon die without resurrecting it, so He will never let Israel die without resurrecting it."

Finally, let us note the connection between light, cosmic order, and divine wisdom: "The wind of wisdom and power is the east wind, for from it come the sun and the moon and all the stars."(MG 350) "In the future God will sit in the Garden of Eden and explain the Torah, and all the righteous sit before Him and all the family of heaven stand on their feet; to His right the sun with the planets and the moon, and all the stars to His left."(Ibid., 347) In sum, the dominant idea in the motif of heavenly bodies is the perfection of cosmic order -- the elimination of the power of potentiality -- which the righteous both experience and in some sense embody. But the sun and the moon may also symbolize the state of potentiality which precedes and makes possible every actualization of cosmos.

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[20] This motif is related to that of medicinal plants (see n. 11 above) and medicinal waters. In general, all ills and evils are cured in the future world, and the means which accomplish this are all symbolic of order and life.

[21] See the manuscript of PR cited in the ET, p. 301.

6E. The ambivalence of the sun in terms of the chaos/ cosmos polarity is emphasized by Eliade. He finds the sun to be the particular symbol of kingship (PCR, Ch. 2), which, as we shall see, is an important symbol of cosmic order in the aggada. Yet he also says that "A sun hero will always present in addition a 'dark side,' a connection with the world of the dead, with initiation, fertility and the rest." (PCR, 150) The main idea here is that the mythic hero, like the sun, descends into the underworld and then rises again undiminished. Unlike the moon, the sun and the sun hero are never dissolved in the process. There is one aggadic passage which is of interest in this context: in the Messianic age, "the power of Israel is like the power of the sun, at which no one can look directly."(48) Now the word translated here as "power" is the Hebrew g'burah, which can also mean "heroism." Thus it is possible that the aggada, too, sees the relationship between the sun and the heroes of Israel who must experience chaos as a part of the experience of redemption. It is true that the differences between lunar and solar symbolism which Eliade defines so well are not brought into a significant role in the aggada. But the idea of both sun and moon as symbols of the necessary connection between chaos and new cosmos is evident in the aggada.

7. Another widespread symbolic motif related to the theme of light is that of precious stones and precious metals. This theme occurs especially in the descriptions of the new Jerusalem and its Temple. The walls surrounding Jerusalem are made of silver, gold, jewels, brightly colored gems, sapphires, and carbuncle respectively.(PM 340) "He will build Jerusalem with sapphires, and those stones will shine like the sun."(SR 15.21) This simile indicates that the jewels represent those values of the sun and the light of Jerusalem which were discussed above.[22] Further, "there will be suspended in Jerusalem 72 pearls which shine from one end of the world to the other." (52) The pearl, in Eliade's view, is the chief symbol of fertility among precious stones.(IS, Ch.4) Yet here the pearl retains the values of the other jewels as well. The cosmicizing significance of the jewels is pointed up by the idea that in the future boundaries will be marked by precious

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[22] According to TB Sof'rim 11, the sun and moon will be replaced by a disk of precious gems and pearls in the future world.

stones and pearls. (PR 149a) "The boundaries of Jerusalem will be made of precious stones and pearls and all Israel will come and take whatever they want of them." (53) The ease of obtaining food in the paradisal state is paralleled by the ease of obtaining tremendous wealth; man is free from the restraints of having to work in order to live.

The theme of fertility and the power of life is carried out in descriptions of the future Temple: "The Temple is built of four kinds of gold: purified gold, refined gold, pure gold, and gold of Parwayim -- gold which produces fruit [Heb. perwt]." (54)[23] "In the Temple even the pictures on the walls, which were made of gold and which had all kinds of trees depicted on them, produced fruit." (55) Here gold is a miraculous source of fertility and life, a motif which is linked directly with the Temple, the center of the cosmos. This is echoed by the idea that "in the future God will make the great gate of the Temple and its two wickets from one stone of pearl." (PR 149a) Eliade emphasizes the significance of gates and threshholds as demarcating between sacred and profane -- setting the boundaries of cosmos and chaos (SP,25);[24] here this cosmicizing function is performed by a symbol of fertility and abundant life.[25]

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[23] Notice here that fruition is parallel to purification -- both imply the passage from potentiality to actuality; see Eliade, FC, 57.

[24] The centrality of the m'zuzah -- doorpost marker -- as a religious symbol in the Jewish home shows the importance of this idea in Judaism.

[25] Another description of the Temple sees it as "founded on sapphire set in crystal." (56) Interestingly, Eliade sees crystal as symbolic of the vault of the sky, and

A similar range of ideas is found in the images of the Garden of Eden, which is full of precious metals and stones. Each of the righteous has a throne,[26] and "no two are alike; some of the thrones are of silver and some are of pearls."(57) A visionary describes the "houses and gates of the righteous with their threshholds and their doorposts made of precious stones"(SE 48); we mentioned the cosmic significance of threshholds above. Passage (37) quoted earlier describes the canopies of the righteous with vines of gold above them and shining pearls hanging from the vines. Here the theme of life and immortality is stressed. That idea is connected with nourishment in the vision of a rabbi who "saw in a dream that the righteous in the future will eat at a table of gold which has three legs."(TB Ta^{c}anît 25a)

But the royal significance of gold is combined with this theme: angels attend each righteous person and "they put on his head two crowns -- one of precious stones and pearls and one of gold of Parwayim."(SGE I 52)[27] The visionary who saw the crown of David with heavenly bodies set in it also saw "row upon row of angels . . . making crowns of life

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thus connected to uranian and ascension themes. (Sh, 139) But in the aggada the firmament above the Garden of Eden is like a brick of sapphire (SGE II 132), and thus it is the sapphire which symbolizes the link between Temple and sky. Here we might say that Eliade gives the right interpretation but for the wrong symbol (i.e., for crystal rather than sapphire), since the Temple is in fact connected explicitly with sky and ascension themes (cf. section 9 above).

[26] The thrones are reflections of God's throne, and thus symbolize the sacred center which founds a cosmos; cf. section 10, passage (77) above.

[27] See the same motif in Chapter VI, part I.

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and setting in them precious stones and pearls. I said, for whom are these crowns?' He said to me, 'For Israel.'"(MG 9) Here there is an explicit parallel between the heavenly bodies, symbols of cosmos, and the jewels given to the righteous. Yet these are called "crowns of life." The jewels, like the crowns in which they are set, symbolize the interrelatedness of cosmic order and the vital force of cosmic life.

7E. In this particular motif there appears to be a distinct difference between Eliade's interpretation and the aggadic texts. In the latter, it would appear, precious stones and precious metals are symbolic of total actualization -- perfect cosmos and abundant, enduring life. Eliade's view is quite different: "If the Earth is likened to a Mother, all the things that she carries in her bowels are homologous with embryos, or living beings in course of 'gestation.'" (MDM, 169) The pearl is also a symbol of the embryo, because the shell which contains it is emblematic of the vagina. (IS, Ch. 4) Thus precious stones seem to represent something which is in the process of being actualized. In other words, they represent the process of passage from potential to actual, and they participate in both of these modes. It seems, then, that the aggada has taken a symbolic motif which usually represents a lack of complete actualization and transformed it into its opposite. We might say that the process of redemption, which transforms chaos into cosmos, also transforms symbols of chaos into symbols of cosmos.

But it is also possible that the meaning of precious stones which Eliade finds in his study is applicable to the aggada, although not expressed explicitly in the texts. Throughout this chapter there is a series of symbols (summarized in section 14) which, though primarily symbolic of cosmos, also expresses a reminder of the chaos which precedes cosmos and makes it possible. The explicit avowal of this relationship in other aggadic symbols makes it all the more possible that in the case of precious stones the same phenomenon is being expressed implicitly.[28]

8. The last in the group of symbols connected with light is fire. In the future fire is one of the substances which marks the boundary of sacred and profane: "There are three walls of the Garden of Eden and all of them are made of fire."(58) A visionary says: "He showed me the walls of Jerusalem [in the future world], walls of fire surrounding it."(SZ 85) But this is not ordinary fire: "'And I will be for it -- an oracle of God -- a wall of fire surrounding;' This is what God said: 'I and all of My family will become a wall for Jerusalem in the future world.'"(59) The cosmic significance of the manifestation of God as fire is stressed: "In those times, when the [new] Temple and Jerusalem are revealed, the Šekînah will descend from heaven and will stand as a pillar of fire from earth to the firmament "(60),[29] and

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[28] See the beginning of Chapter III, Part IV for more on this theme.

[29] See Section 2 above on the cosmic pillar as a symbol of the sacred center equivalent to the cosmic tree.

the passage goes on to say that its light will make the sun and moon look dim.

Just as in the case of light, the righteous in the future will share in God's mode of manifestation: "In this world Israel clings to God . . . . But in the future world they will exist and be alike. Just as God is fire consuming fire . . . so Israel will be a consuming fire."(61) Passage (39) quoted above describes the righteous with fire coming out of their mouths. "In the future the righteous will walk in fire like a man out walking in the sun on a cool day, and it will be pleasant for them."(62) Eliade has studied this phenomenon of incombustibility, which he calls "mastery of fire," and he finds it to signify the attainment of a purely spiritual condition.(MDM, 70) "At many levels, fire, flame, dazzling light, inner heat, express spiritual experience, the incarnation of the sacred, the proximity of God."(FC, 171) Moreover, the lighting of fires is symbolic of "creation, the reestablishing of forms and limits."(PCR, 399)

But at the same time fire can be the force which destroys and dissolves the world.(CH, 68, 88) This ambivalence of fire (parallel to that of the sun) is clear in the aggada; among the canopies of the righteous in the Garden of Eden there is one of fire: "And why is there a canopy of fire? Because the fire will go out from the canopies of the righteous and the wicked will be burned by it."(63) But the same text shows that this is a divine fire: "How do we know that there will be a canopy of fire which burns the wicked? As it is said, 'The voice of God hews with flaming fire.'"(64)

Two different interpretations of one Talmudic passage express the ambivalence of fire quite well: "Why is there fire in the canopy? To teach that each one will be burned by the canopy of his neighbor," to which Rashi adds: "The canopy of a small person will be burned by the canopy of his neighbor who is larger than he."(65) The English translator adds here: "because of envy" (i.e., to punish the smaller's envy of his larger neighbor), and the translator's interpretation is supported by another aggada.[30] But the text by itself might also indicate a "mastery of fire" attributed to the "smaller person." This text epitomizes the aggada's attitude toward fire: it has both immensely positive (purifying and spiritualizing) and immensely destructive powers. And in each case the fire is seen as a manifestation or product of God.

9. One set of symbols studied extensively by Eliade, but which plays a relatively secondary role in the aggada, is the symbolism of height and ascension. "Thus you find that in the world to come God enlarges Jerusalem until it reaches heaven . . . God raises it from heaven to the firmament, and then to the third heaven, from the third to the fourth . . . and so on until it reaches the Throne of Glory." (66) "In the future God will build Jerusalem in the heavens and call it 'the Throne of Glory.'"(MG 348) A more conser-

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[30] "Each one who has been jealous of the scholars, smoke comes out of the canopies of the righteous and blinds his eyes."(PM 343)

vative text says that "in the future God will raise Jerusalem to a height of three parasangs."(TB B.B. 75a) At the same time, "Jerusalem will descend fully built and geometrically perfect from the heavens."(67) We noted in the preceding chapter that according to Eliade, one way of acquiring true reality is to participate in a celestial archetype, and he gives as a good example of such an archetype the heavenly Jerusalem.(CH, 7) What we find in these texts is that the earthly reality which man experiences and the heavenly archetype are no longer differentiated; in one sense they seem to trade places, and in another sense they seem to merge. Since Jerusalem is the center -- the source of reality for the world -- the fact that it is now an archetypal and heavenly Jerusalem on earth gives the world a more perfect degree of reality.[31]

In the future man will be able to participate constantly in the reality of this new Jerusalem. The Israelites will make their pilgrimages to the Temple every Sabbath and New Moon (rather than just tri-annually as in this world): "How will they come on Sabbath and New Moon from the ends of the earth? The clouds will come and carry them and bring

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[31] The connection of Jerusalem with the sky is fitting; Jerusalem as the center of the world gives the foundation of the cosmic order, and "the sky is the archetype of universal order."(PCR, 62) Moreover, we have seen that the center is a source of fertility and life, and in speaking of the sky, Eliade says "its 'power' is simply an unlimited reservoir of seeds."(PCR, 92) Apparently Jerusalem, being connected with the heaven, is able to dispense the potentiality of the seeds in some ordered way, and therefore is able to actualize life for the world. Cf. the discussion of rivers in Section 3 above as an example of this function of the sacred center.

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them to Jerusalem and they will pray there in the morning." (PR 2a)[32] Eliade tells us that "the ability to rise into the air indicates access to the ultimate realities "(PCR, 108) and that "the 'flight' signifies intelligence, the understanding of secret things and metaphysical truths"(MDM, 105) in particular. The fact that the flight is to the Temple, center of both absolute reality and divine wisdom (because it is the meeting-place of man and God and repository of the Torah), reinforces the relationship between these themes.

Closely connected with the symbolisms of ascension and the center is the symbolism of mountains: "Mountains are often looked on as the place where sky and earth meet, a 'central point' . . . a region impregnated with the sacred."(PCR, 99) It should not be surprising, then, to find that in the future Jerusalem "sits upon 33 slopes, and the Temple mount is the chief among them,"(68) "And the Temple is built upon the tops of five mountains."(69) In a description of the various classes of the righteous in the Garden of Eden we find that "the third class goes up on the mountain to meet the King . . . . The sixth class is upon the holy mountain of the King."(MT 11.6) Here God is identified with both mountain and monarchical symbolism at once. The meaning of this symbolism is pointed up by the idea that

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[32] Since we are not dealing with the process of redemption here, but only the redeemed state itself, I would merely mention that the process is often compared to a magical flight involving the assistance of clouds. Note also the symbolism of morning in this passage.

"the mountains of God are upon the great abyss."(70)[33] We also saw above that in the future the mountains will be sources of the rivers of milk, honey, and wine.(25)

Paradoxically, however, another motif tells that the mountains will be levelled in the future: "Originally the entire world was one level plain, and it became [in the generation of ʾEnoš] mountains and rocky grounds and valleys; and in the future it will be returned to a plain."(71) According to Eliade the perfectly flat plain is a widespread symbol of the paradisal state (Q, 87), and he sees in it "the third dimension abolished; an image expressive of spatial transcendence."(MDM, 112) However, we must note that the creation of mountains and valleys is a central element in the cosmogony; it is precisely these natural features which change the land from a homogeneous to a heterogeneous space. (Cf. Eliade, SP, 20) There is a distinct ambivalence here: the mountains, which represent actualized cosmos, and the plain, which seems to represent virtuality and potentiality, somehow coexist in the redeemed state.[34]

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[33] I take this to mean that the mountains protect the world from chaos. According to the aggada, the Temple mountain is situated directly above the opening which leads to the abyss, and it is the "foundation stone" of the Temple which prevents the abyss from rising through that opening and flooding the world. Cf. TB Suk. 53a,b.

[34] It is possible that the authors of passage (71) and similar passages assumed the existence of mountains supporting Jerusalem in the future world. If so, the image of the plain would merely reinforce the uniqueness of the sacred center. However, the texts give no evidence either way on this question.

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10. Another symbolic theme closely related to the foregoing is that of kingship. In the future Israel will rule the world (MG 346), and all the nations will come to Jerusalem as subjects come to the court of a king.

> In the future all the people and kingdoms will be gathered in Jerusalem, as it is said, "And all the peoples will be gathered there in the name of God," and further on it says , "Let the waters be gathered." Just as the gathering mentioned further on is to gather all the primeval waters into one place, so the gathering mentioned here is to gather all the peoples and kindgoms within it [i.e., within Jerusalem] . (ARN I 35)

The cosmicizing significance of kingship is made explicit in this analogy to the original cosmogony. The cosmic harmony established in the redeemed state -- symbolized in political terms as a universal kingship -- extends to all living creatures: "God brings all the beasts and all the birds and all the crawling creatures and makes a covenant with them and with all Israel."(SR 15.21)

But who is the king? In a listing of ten kings who rule the world one aggada says, "The ninth king is the king Messiah who is destined to rule from one end of the world to the other . . . . With the tenth king the kingship returns to its rightful possessor; He who was the first King, He is the last King."(72) God is the source of all royal authority, and the Messiah is only His delegate. However, the people of Israel are also allowed to share in this authority in the future. One aggada[35] tells us that "all the children of Israel will be like kings for they will be possessed of

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[35] A manuscript of PR used in the ET, p. 665.

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God's wisdom." Another text says that of the seven classes of righteous in the Garden of Eden "the seventh class is in the place of[36] the King."(MT 11.6)

This theme is carried out in describing the righteous in the Garden of Eden. In passages cited above, (44 and SGE I 52), we saw that they each have crowns upon their heads. In addition, each of the righteous has a throne, and "for each and every throne there are 60 angels serving it."(73) Furthermore, God tells the righteous, "My children, from the day I created My world I have withheld from you nothing but the Throne of Glory."(74) Clearly the righteous share in the monarchical powers of God. The especially expansive powers of David, the archetypal king, are indicated in the descriptions of his throne: "David went up to the heavenly Temple, and there a throne of fire was prepared for him which was 40 parasangs high, its length twice that, and its width double its length."(75)[37] The symbolism of the royal scepter is brought out in these passages: "'The scepter shall not depart from Judah' -- This is the Messiah son of David who is destined to rule the kingdoms with a staff."(BR, 97) The Messiah dispenses justice to all from Jerusalem, and thus superintends the perfect order of the future world, "with a staff." "The righteous in the future will resurrect the dead, as it is said, 'Old men and women will again live in the ruins of Jerusalem, each with a staff in his hand because of old age,' and it is written, 'And you shall put my staff upon the child.'"[38] (TB Pes. 68a)

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[36] "In the place of (Heb. *bim'qom*) can also mean "in place of"; i.e., instead of. The use of this particular term seems to imply a very close association between God and the highest class of the righteous.

[37] Here the cosmicizing and spiritual nature of fire is also stressed.

What does it mean to have monarchical powers? In Eliade's view, the gods "who held on to their scepters . . . thus remained the guarantors of the order of the universe, guardians of the norms, and personifications of Law."(PCR, 92) In addition, "a wise king, whose reign is based on justice, assures the fertility of earth, animals, and women." (PCR, 255) "The king becomes in some manner responsible for the stability, fruitfulness and prosperity of the entire cosmos."(TO, 155) Thus, "frequently, as we should expect, the paradisal period opens with the enthronement of a new sovereign."(CH, 128) In other words, to be a king is to be the source of a new cosmos, the source of its order and vitality. If the Israelites are kings, they not only experience but become part of and radiate this cosmic reality.

Since the values of the king are the values of the center, it is not surprising that Jerusalem will be the seat of the future monarch: "Jerusalem is destined to become the capital city for all countries and to draw them like a river to it and to its glory."(76) "God will call Jerusalem by a new name in the future, as it is said, 'On that day they will call Jerusalem the Throne of God.'"(BR 64.4) "The righteous who remain in Zion and the saintly who are left in it -- God will seat each and every one upon the Throne of Glory."(77) In the course of this chapter we have seen references to Jerusalem on virtually every page. Hardly any symbol is not connected in some way or another with the holy city. It should be pointed out that in the aggadot we are considering the concepts of the Temple, Jerusalem, and the Land of Israel are in many ways coequal or homologous. All are destined to expand to a huge size: "Jerusalem, is destined to reach the gates of Damascus."(78) "The Temple shall be so large that it will extend to Damascus."(79) "Jerusalem in the future will be as big as the Land of Israel, and the Land of Israel as big as the entire world.'(80)

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[38] The staff here is an agent of resurrection; cf. II Kings 4:29.

The meaning of this expansion is implicit in a passage discussing the description of the future Jerusalem:

> How do we know about its extent? Thus we are taught: "From the tower of Ḥananʾel to the wine presses of the king: . . . to the wine presses which are worked by the King of king of kings, the Holy One Blessed by He . . . and that is the great sea ʾ*oq'yanos*.(81)[39]

Thus Jerusalem, the sacred center, extends to the boundary of sea, the archetype of chaos. Everything is either completely sacred land or else ocean. Yet the ocean too is a possession of God, and it is related to wine, which, we have seen, is a symbol of sacred life. Perhaps the aggada intends to say that the ocean contains the potentiality of the plenitude of life, which is actualized through the sacred center, and the redeemed world is divided between pure potentiality and pure actuality. If so, the important point is that it is the same God who superintends both the potentiality and its actualization. In any event, the enlargement of Jerusalem seems to symbolize an intensification of the sanctity of the land throughout the world.

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[39] The last phrase in this passage is added from the traditional commentary, *Matanot K'hunah*.

11. According to Eliade, one of the marks of the passage into a spiritual state -- the passage from profane to sacred -- is the acquisition of supernatural knowledge and wisdom (cf. especially RSI, *passim*). We have mentioned this theme in connection with the symbolism of wine, flight, and kingship. We have also seen that in the future God Himself will teach the righteous in a cosmic assembly. This teaching is conceived as taking place in an academy, as on earth, but with some difference: "The academy [Heb. *beît midraš*] of God is 180,000,000 parasangs long."(82) It is assumed that the subject of God's teaching will be the Torah. But in the future world man learns things about the Torah inaccessible on earth: "Israel sits before God as a student before his master and hears the reason why each particular chapter was written."(83) "And God sits and reveals to them the reasons for the laws of the Torah, why He forbade pork to us and blood and lard and meat with milk."(PH 47) One opinion even holds that "God explains to them the reasons for the new Torah which He is to give them in the future through the Messiah."(84)[40] Furthermore, God says: "In this

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[40] The question of whether a new Torah will be pro-

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world I gave you the Torah and some of you forgot it; but in the world to come I will teach it Myself to all Israel, and they will learn it and not forget it."(PRK 12)[41]

Eliade stresses the significance of remembering; religious remembering is a means of keeping in constant contact with the absolute reality which was manifest at the time of beginnings, the cosmogonic period.[42] In the aggada, too, remembering means keeping oneself in contact with God by obedience to His laws. But the experience of God in the future can also be a more immediate one: "In the future God will be fully revealed to Israel [literally, 'eye to eye'] . . . . And all Israel in the future will become prophets."(MG 346) Here the themes of immediate experience of God and divine wisdom are directly related. But this wisdom is not necessarily for Israel alone:

> "I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." And He also says, "And also the man-servants and the maid-servants," to include mankind, birds, and beasts. Only mankind is mentioned explicitly. That is why it says "And also" -- to include all of them.(ARN II 43)

11E. In Eliade's theory, the knowledge of spiritual secrets is equivalent to participating in those secrets and acquiring the power which they impart.(MR, 14-16) This idea

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mulgated for the redeemed world remains unresolved in the aggada; cf. BR 98.9 However, the important point is that, in any event, there is a specific structure of cosmic law embodied in some Torah, even after redemption. Cf. Section 11E below for another view.

[41] Cf. Y 803.

[42] This is developed most fully in MR, Ch. 7. Cf. also Chapter VI, Part III of this dissertation for the same motif.

may be reflected in the aggadic statement that the Holy Spirit will be poured out on all people, making them prophets; here there seems to be a direct participation in, rather than merely encounter with, divine wisdom and the secrets of the Torah. If Eliade's view is indeed applicable here, it would have further consequences. For divine wisdom is the source of the cosmic order, and the Torah is the "blueprint" of that order.[43] To learn the secrets of Torah hidden from man in this world would then mean to participate in and to acquire the power of the bases of the perfect cosmos reflected in the Torah. In this way all living things, and especially the righteous who study in God's academy, would have the perfection of cosmic order incorporated into their own being. We have previously seen the idea that the people of the redeemed world do not merely live surrounded by symbols of perfect cosmos; rather, they are assimilated to those symbols themselves and are sources of cosmic order. Thus Eliade's idea here may very well be applicable to the aggada.

But according to Eliade, divine wisdom is not always imparted by the gods: "Even in developed societies, the dead will be regarded as the possessors of arcane knowledge, and prophecy or poetic inspiration will be sought where the dead lie buried."(RSI, 37) In addition, "That prophetic power emanates from water is a primitive intuition which we find

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[43] "The architect does not build from his own ideas; he has parchments and tablets to know how he should arrange the rooms and openings. Thus God looked at the Torah and created the world."(BR 1.1)

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in a great part of the world."(PCR, 202) It would seem that in order to gain divine wisdom one must somehow be in touch with the realm of potentiality and chaos as well as the realm of actualized cosmos. This idea may be a basis for the aggadic tradition (a minority tradition) which claims that the structure of cosmic law embodied in the Torah will be dissolved in the future: "There is nothing more strongly forbidden than a menstruating woman; as soon as the woman sees blood God forbids her to her husband. But in the future world He will permit her."(85) And another text refers to "the Messianic age in which there is neither guilt nor innocence,"(86) because there is no structure of cosmic law. In any case, the connection between death and wisdom is supported by the obvious fact that only physical death gives one access to the secrets of Eden. And, as we shall see, the revelation of God's word at Sinai is integrally linked with death.

12. There is one theme which occurs in the aggada in connection with many different symbols and which might be denoted by Eliade's term "plenitude." Everything in the redeemed world is of a huge size. We have already seen this theme in agricultural symbolism, in the increased size of the holy city and holy land, and in two specific passages which tell of the tremendous size of David's throne(75) and the divine academy(82). In the divine academy, the circle of students is 18,000 parasangs across.(PH 47) The houses in the Garden of Eden are on a similar scale; one text says that

they are each 600,000 miles across (87), and another that "each and every house is 120,000 miles across and it reaches to a height of 1,000,000 miles."(88) Enlarging on the idea that "each and every righteous person has a world unto himself"(BR 96) in the future, is the statement that "in the future God will give to each and every righteous person 310 worlds."(89) Finally, as for the Garden of Eden itself, which contains all of these worlds, "its size is the distance of a journey of 800,000 Years,"(MC 28) and the editor of this text emends it to read "1,800,000 years."

The nature of man will change to suit this enlarged scale; the aggadists debated whether the righteous in the future would be 100, 200, 300, or even 900 cubits tall. (BaR 13.12) One text goes so far as to say that "the stature of Adam, the first man, was from the east to the west[44]. . . and in the future God will return this stature to Israel." (90) This physical increase will be paralleled by an increase in length of life: "He who will die in the Messianic age at the age of one hundred will be like one who dies now at the age of twenty."(Ḥaî Gaʾon 140) Although each of these examples of plenitude may have a distinct meaning, they all contribute to the general idea of the grand scale of being in the future world.

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[44] I take this to mean that Adam was as large as the entire world; cf. Louis Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews (7 vols., Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1909-1938), Vol. I, p. 59 and Vol. V, p. 79. Eliade discusses the primal giant, for the most part, as the source from which, by means of a primal sacrifice, the cosmos is created; cf. PCR, 97 and FC, 70.

I have avoided the term "being" in this exposition as much as possible, because ontological terminology is generally foreign to the aggada. Yet, as Eliade points out (SP, 13), although the philosophical terminology may be lacking in a religious tradition, the truth expressed in the West by philosophical and ontological terms may very well be found in that tradition. Thus it may be admissible to deal with the aggada in ontological terms. Being, as Eliade generally uses the terms, is the most abstract conceptualization of absolute reality, which necessarily implies both cosmos and life. Therefore, since the perfection of cosmos and abundance of life are dominant themes in the aggada, it may not be mistaken to say that the theme of "plenitude of being," in Eliade's sense, is dominant too. And this conclusion seems to be reinforced by these aggadot of huge sizes -- the huge scale of being.

Let us not forget either, as the aggadists could not forget, that the most sacred word of the Hebrew language -- the tetragrammaton -- is directly related to the Hebrew word for "being" in the present tense. The word which means "being" is HWYH,[45] which by a simple transposition -- a favorite technique in the aggada -- easily becomes YHWH.[46] Per-

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[45] According to Jastrow, the word can also mean "status, stability"; i.e., a fixed and stable order. See Marcus Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature (New York: Judaica Press, 1971; first published 1901), p. 338.

[46] Both the semantic denotation of the letters YHWH and the particular grouping of four letters in itself are held to be sacred.

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haps this is one reason why the aggada avoids the term HWYH for the most part. Admitting the concept of the "plenitude of being" into the interpretation of the aggada seems to help particularly in understanding relatively abstract symbols such as the profusion of precious stones and the great increase in light. Because of its abstraction, the concept of being can serve as a sort of lowest common denominator for virtually all of the symbols which we have been studying here.

But the aggada gives us an indication of another possible interpretation for these symbols of huge size and large scale. Perhaps they are concrete depictions intended to express infinitude, which is in itself a concept unable to be depicted. This possibility presents itself when we look at a series of aggadot which claim that infinitude is an important feature of the future world. The size of the Garden of Eden is said to be not merely huge, but limitless: "Moses inquired of Šamšîʾel and asked him, "What is the length of the Garden of Eden?' He said to him, 'There is no limit and there is no numbering the Garden of Eden or the thrones that are in it.'"(91) The same theme is carried out in the comparison between the righteous and the stars: "Just as the groups upon groups of stars are without number, so the groups upon groups of righteous are without number."(Sifre D. 47)

But more important is the infinitude of Eden in a temporal sense: "In the world to come everything lives for

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ever and ever and ever."(MG 98),[47] to which the editor annotates: "the new world has only a beginning -- it has no end." The aggada has God speak these words: "I created seven worlds and among them I chose only the seventh; six are to come and go, and one which is entirely Sabbath and rest for life everlasting."(92) And in reference to this new, seventh world we are told: "If the heaven and earth, which were only created for the honor of Israel, live and exist for ever and ever and ever, how much more so is this true of the righteous for whose sake this world was created." (93) Thus the prolonged age of men in the Messianic age is merely a foreshadowing of their immortality in the world to come. This example seems to indicate that the plenitude of being -- symbolized by longevity -- is only a finite symbol of infinitude -- here symbolized by immortality. For we know that the aggada insists on immortality, not merely longevity, as a chief characteristic of redemption. Thus longevity can not be an end in itself; the aggada holds out the promise of a plenitude of being and life which is without limit, but expresses that idea as much as possible in concrete terms.

Immortality, however, is not merely a matter of endless duration in time. It can also imply a state which is outside time. Perhaps the most important aspect of the paradisal epoch or the time of beginnings in Eliade's theory is its atemporality. It is an epoch free from the debilitating influence of the flow of time and history. Now except for the importance of immortality, there is very little mention of either temporality or atemporality in the aggadot being studied here.[48] Yet is seems fair to say that once the redeemed state is achieved, according to the aggada, there is no hint of changes in the situation brought about by the flow of historical time.[49] In Eliade's view history tends to drain the world of its being; thus the plenitude of being in the future world implies an absence of history, an escape from history.

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[47] The Hebrew *l'ʿolam* *ul'ʿolmeî* *ʿolamim* means literally "for eternity and an eternity of eternities" or "for a universe and universes of universes." The Hebrew *ʿolam* expresses very well the coincidence of temporal and spatial infinitude in one concept.

The relationship between perfect cosmos and the escape from history into infinitude is seen by the aggada: "'Your righteousness is upon your judgments'; like the mountains of God upon the great abyss.[50] Just as there is no end to those mountains, so there is no end to the righteous." (94) "When Israel does the will of God [i.e., follows the cosmic law] they are like the sands of the seashore [i.e., infinite]."(Sifre D. 47) "God will reveal to them the Ineffable Name by which the heaven and earth and the entire world were created,[51] so that they might live and exist forever, and they will do whatever they wish."(95)

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[48] Note, however, passage (92), which directly links immortality to the idea that the future world is "entirely Sabbath and rest."

[49] This is admittedly a generalization based on my study of the sources. There may be significant exceptions that I am unaware of. Of course, there is one important event -- the end of the Messianic age with the Last Judgment and the installation of the newly created world, the world to come. But within either the Messianic age or the world to come there is no change, no "history." And it is highly possible that the idea of a temporal sequence linking the Messianic age and the world to come is an artificial construct which obscures the truly atemporal nature of the experience being expressed; cf. Scholem's words in n. 1 of my Preface above.

[50] Cf. passage (70) and n. 42 above.

The end of this last passage introduces a new note, reminiscent of the title of Eliade's book, Yoga, Immortality, and Freedom. In general, Eliade sees the immortality of the paradisal age as accompanied by freedom from law. (Cf. TO, 127) It is not surprising that in the Jewish tradition, which holds strict adherence to law as a central element in the scheme of redemption, even the most perfect epoch has strong elements of law and obedience to law in it. Yet there are some hints of freedom.[52] We saw above the opinion that law will be abolished and that there will be neither innocence nor guilt in the future world. We saw the ease by which men gain their food and wealth. In addition there are these passages: "In the future world God gives to each and every one whatever he wishes."(SR 25.3) "It is written, 'If he knocks out the tooth of his man-servant or his maid-servant, he shall set him free.' How much more so is this true of those upon whom suffering comes."(96) Thus freedom is an important, if not often dwelt upon, theme in the aggada, and it contributes to the overall idea of the absence of limits.

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[51] The Ineffable Name is an agent of cosmogony and therefore symbolic of cosmos; cf. Chapter III, Part II of this dissertation.

[52] Even obedience to law in the future world is compatible with total freedom, for there will be no inclination to evil in man, and thus no tendency contrary to obedience. Obedience will be effortless.

13. Finally, we shall look at the place of the specific symbols of chaos in the redeemed world. First let us note that the aggada, like Eliade, is aware of a series of interrelated symbols of chaos: "The wicked are darkness, Gehinom is darkness, the abyss is darkness."(97) "What is the meaning of 'from the midst of darkness?' This is the angel of death, who is called 'darkness.'"(Šir R 8,6,1) In a passage cited above (34) we saw that the present world is also called the equivalent of night or darkness. Thus it is not surprising that death, evil, and chaos in general have their place in this world.

But what about the future world? For the most part, chaos is either eliminated or separated from cosmos. "In the future world I will uproot the tendency to evil (Heb. *yeṣer haraʿ*) from you, and there will be no death in the world;" (DR 2.30) here the connection between evil and death is explicit, and both are eliminated. While most sources confine this immortality to the people of Israel, some say that there will be no death at all, "neither for Israel nor for the nations."(BR 26.2)[53] According to this universalist view, what was previously chaos is now incorporated into the perfect cosmos. The same idea is expressed in a different way: "In the future God will give the idol a little bit of real-

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[53] But see the very same passage for the opposing view.

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ity, and it will come and bow before God."(98) A lengthy passage (MG 347) describes the raising of people from hell, and their entry into the Garden of Eden, because God has pity on them. However, these are only the wicked of Israel and the righteous of the nations. The idea that mercy is not extended to the totally wicked is also found in other passages: "God will accept gifts from all the nations in the future, except for Edom [i.e., Rome]."(SR 35.5) "All cripples will be healed in the world to come, but the serpent will not be healed."(99)

The elements of chaos which are not incorporated into cosmos are consigned to the antithesis, the chaos of Gehinom. Yet, as we have seen above, there is a geographical relationship between Gehinom and the Garden of Eden. (Cf. passages 12, 13) Furthermore, "Gehinom is situated in Jerusalem."(100)[54] There is also a parallel between the cosmos of the Garden of Eden and the arrangement of Gehinom: "Each class [of righteous] has its own dwelling place in the Garden of Eden, and parallel to them are the seven dwelling places of the wicked in Gehinom."(101) We saw above a different opinion,which holds that there will be no Gehinom; the wicked will be burned by the same sun which cures the righteous(50), or the wicked will be burned by the fires from the canopies of the righteous. (63, 64)

The basic idea here is that the punishment of the wicked is an integral aspect of cosmicization (through the sun or fire); this is further stressed in a passage immediately preceding one cited above concerning justice being done in Jerusalem in the morning (35): "God will only punish the wicked in Gehinom in the morning." Finally, the relationship of cosmos and chaos is shown in an abstract way by two passages from the description of the Garden of Eden. One, cited above (38), says that one wall of the Garden is made of light mixed with darkness. Another says that the outer wall of the Garden (marking the boundary of the sacred space) is "of black fire which is seen and yet is not seen."(102) In sum, the full range of possible relationships between chaos and paradisal cosmos appears. While the power of chaos is generally overcome or negated in some way, this can come about by chaos being incorporated into the new cosmos. And the separation between chaos and cosmos is sometimes not too distinct; chaos seems to participate in the process of cosmicization and in the cosmic structure of the redeemed world (to a slight extent) as well.

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[54] This is geographically correct. The gei̇̂ hinom, the Valley of Hinom, is directly adjacent to Jerusalem.

14. As a conclusion to this chapter, I want to make some summary statements about the relationship of chaos and redemption. First, however, another conclusion of great importance must be noted. It appears evident that Mircea Eliade's basic theory of the meaning of the sacred is quite relevant to the aggada. As we saw in the first chapter, Eliade equates the sacred with absolute reality, which in turn implies chiefly the plenitude of being, perfection of cosmos,

and abundance of life. It is quite clear that virtually all of the symbols of the future world in the aggada represent one aspect or another of absolute reality. No doubt parts of this chapter seemed even repetitious in making this point. Yet it appears to be important enough that repetition is not unwarranted. Furthermore, many of the passages studied show that the aggada, like Eliade, sees being, cosmos, and life as merely different facets of a single experience; again and again we saw more than one of these facets suggested by a single symbol. Other religious values which Eliade stresses are also shown by the aggada to be integral parts of this single experience: wisdom, spirituality, atemporality, a transcendence of limits which at times implies infinitude (especially the infinitude of life).

As in Eliade's theory, the aggada believes that this experience of absolute reality is most immediate and intense in the era immediately following a cosmic beginning -- a paradisal era. Now, Eliade notes that one of the marks of such an epoch is a direct contact between man and the gods (MDM, 65); the aggada develops this theme in many ways, perhaps most strikingly in the intimate picture of the banquet in the World to Come, at which God sits at the table and says, "I Myself have only come here in order to feast with you."(103) But at this point Eliade's theory and the understanding of the aggada must part company. For Eliade, the experience of the supreme god is only one among many forms that the experience of absolute reality can take (i.e., it

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is one hierophany among many). For the Jewish tradition, on the other hand, the concept of "absolute reality" can only refer to the one God. All of the characteristics which Eliade uses to concretize the notion of absolute reality are terms which can equally well be applied to describe the nature or the acts of God in the aggadic tradition. The symbols we have been studying are merely forms which serve to mediate one aspect or another of the experience of God, and, as we noted in several specific instances, they gain their significance only through their association with God.[55] Ultimately, all of these symbols are saying one thing: the redeemed world is one in which man has a constant, abundant, and ubiquitous experience of God, an experience whose various aspects I have tried to delineate.

With the understanding that in the aggada "God" and "absolute reality" are so congruent as to be virtually synonymous, let us return to the question which closed the previous chapter: can there be an experience of absolute reality and pure potentiality simultaneously? The fate of the forces of evil in the future world shows clearly that the experience of chaos decreases as the experience of absolute reality intensifies. For the most part, chaos in the future world is radically separated from the new cosmos. But many of the symbols chosen to express the nature of redemption indicate -- either explicitly or implicitly -- that chaos is never totally eliminated. The most immediate and perfect experience of absolute reality that the aggadists could imagine does not entail the absence of the experience of chaos. Let us review the various ways in which chaos is presented as part of the redeemed world.

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[55] Eliade makes the same point in his discussion of light symbolism in Judaism (TO, 57).

First, we saw that the sacred center connects the perfect cosmos (the Garden of Eden) with the ultimate chaos (Gehinom), and that the latter has an aspect of cosmic structure too. And we saw that the center mediates between chaos and cosmos by imposing structure on the manifestation of potentiality (water, sky). Thus the importance of the center seems to lie at least partially in its role as a bridge between potentiality and its actualization -- i.e., its role as the place of creation -- and the experience of the sacred center implies an experience of both modalities simultaneously. Second, we saw that a large number of symbols (moon, fire, paradisal plain, Leviathan, the wall around the Garden of Eden -- and if we accept Eliade's views we may add the sun, precious stones, and divine wisdom) are simultaneously symbols of cosmos and of the chaos which must necessarily precede cosmos. The experience of the perfection of cosmos seems to carry implicit in it a remembering of that which makes cosmos possible. Thus the more intense the experience of cosmos, as an aspect of absolute reality, the more intense also the experience of at least the memory of chaos. Third, as we saw, the process of cosmicization -- the elimination of chaos -- involves the dissolution of chaos in chaos, or in other words, the temporary intensification of chaos. This is part of a principle which the aggada uses widely and which we shall see often in the following chapters: chaos brings chaos upon itself. And the source of this chaos is the power of cosmicization, absolute reality, God.

In fact (and this is a very important point), we have seen that every symbol and therefore every experience in the redeemed world is ultimately a representation of the force of God. Even the destructive forces of fire and ocean are explicitly said to be possessions or manifestations of God. Thus, ultimately, if there is any experience of chaos in the redeemed world it must be simultaneous with the most perfect possible experience of absolute reality itself -- i.e., the experience of God. This conclusion is supported by the observation that there is only one unified symbol system to express all the facets of this experience. We do not have two sets of symbols, one for absolute reality and one for chaos. And, as Eliade says, the experience mediated by a symbol or system of symbols, although it may include many complex and even opposite elements, is ultimately a single unified experiential whole.(TO, 203)

It would have been possible, to be sure, for the aggadists to depict chaos as completely eliminated from the paradisal state. But the present chapter makes it clear (and the following chapters will make it even more clear) that the aggadists experienced chaos as an integral and necessary aspect of absolute reality. Thus their depiction of the perfection of religious experience had to include some reference to the experience of chaos as a part of this single experience of redemption. However, in each case, the symbol which expresses chaos also expresses the negation of the power of chaos to challenge cosmos effectively. The experience of chaos is seen to be either a reminder of past experience or a means to the enhancement of cosmos. But there is no death nor imperfection in the cosmic order; the ability of potentiality to cause substantive change in the nature of the redeemed world is negated. Thus the aggada seems to say that redemption involves two types of experience: one, the experience of absolute reality as the coincidence of opposites which contains both cosmos and chaos, and the other, the experience of absolute reality as a negation of the power of chaos. And, to repeat, every aspect of the experience of redemption must be part of the single experience of the redeeming acts and the redeeming nature of God. With the understanding that it is such a single experience of absolute reality which is the goal of the redemptive process, we will now turn to the nature of that process, as it is depicted by the aggada to have occurred in the past.

CHAPTER III

THE EXODUS

Having ascertained the general significance of the future redemption in the aggada, we must now turn to the past redemption and the process by which it was attained. In this study we will want to stress four factors: (1) redemption in the past implies the attainment of a paradisal state like that of the future; (2) this paradisal state is the direct result of a new creation on the cosmic level and a new birth on the individual level -- the moment of the fullest manifestation of absolute reality; (3) the three functions of chaos described by Eliade are central in the process depicted in the aggada; (4) the aggada has a definite view on the relationship of the experience of chaos to the experience of absolute reality. Thus the present chapter is divided into four parts. Part I describes the paradisal state, Part II the new creation and new birth by which it is attained, Part III the role of chaos in the process and state of redemption. Part IV will summarize the significance of chaos discovered here and examine its relationship to the experience of absolute reality in redemption.

The aggada sees the past redemption as a single process beginning with the Exodus and culminating in the revelation at Sinai. No one part of that process displays all of the traits of the paradisal state described in the previous

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chapter; when taken as a whole, however, the redemption of the past does display the entire range of symbols of the redeemed state. Furthermore, the significance of chaos is developed and deepened as the process proceeds. Thus we will not see the entire significance of redemption, nor the relation of chaos to it, until the study is complete. In the present chapter we will see only the beginnings of a fully perfected paradisal cosmic order. But one conclusion of central importance from the last chapter will be reaffirmed and ramified: the process of redemption, involving the experience of both chaos and paradisal cosmos, is a single experience of the acts of a single God, who is Himself the only absolute reality.

I

The dominant idea in the first part of this chapter is that the Reed Sea was turned into a paradise while the Israelites passed through it. God "made it a valley and brought up grass and Israel and their cattle would graze among the grasses."(1) A variant on this passage in another source (MT 114.7) confirms the idea that the people are likened to cattle by citing Isaiah 63:14: "You shall descend into the valley like cattle." Thus the people could get their food with the ease and tranquillity of cattle grazing. But the ease of getting food is also depicted in a much more miraculous manner: as the Israelite women passed through the sea, if one's child cried from hunger, "she would stretch out her arm between the waves of the sea and pick for her son figs and peaches and pomegranates and give them to her son." (2; cf. also SR 21.10)

If one asks how an abundance of fruit trees could grow in a salt sea, the answer is given: God "sweetened its water for them and caused all kinds of fruit trees to grow for them . . . . And everything that Israel desired He made for them."(Vayošaʿ 51) Here the fruit trees explicitly symbolize the plenitude and freedom which is characteristic of the redeemed state. The same idea is given a very interesting expression: "Just as in the desert they did not lack for anything, so in the depths [Heb. *t'hom*, literally 'abyss'] they did not lack for anything."(3) This passage indicates clearly that the sea, which, like the desert, is ordinarily a place of primordial chaos [*t'hom*],[1] is in this case combined with the experience of supernatural plenitude characteristic of redemption.

Finally, the Israelites themselves are compared to the paradisal garden:

> "And when Pharaoh sent [Heb. *šalaḥ*] the people out" -- This is what the Scripture says: "Your shoots [Heb. *šalaḥayik*, literally "your sending"] are a garden [Heb. *pardes*] of pomegranates." Just as this garden is full of every kind of tree, each tree producing fruit according to its own kind [cf. Gen. 1:11], so Israel went out of Egypt full of everything which is good of all the various kinds of blessings.(4)

Thus in crossing the sea and leaving Egypt the Israelites were surrounded by and took on the characteristics of the

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[1] Cf. Genesis 1:2.

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paradisal garden whose significance was outlined in the preceding chapter.

A very common aggada is that "Sweet water emerged for them from the midst of salt water."(5) Here there is a very succinct statement of the bi-valence of water; salt water represents the ocean, or chaos, while fresh water represents the rivers, which are symbolic of paradisal cosmos. While in the future world there is no salt sea involved, so that fresh water must carry both poles of the bi-valence,[2] here the people are in the middle of a salt sea, so that rivers of fresh water can carry the single value of cosmos and redemption.

One passage makes this identification of fresh water and paradisal rivers explicit: "He brought forth for them sweet from salt and Israel would drink from it, as it is said, 'And He brought forth streams from rock, which descend like rivers of water.'" (ARN II 38) The Biblical passage cited here is related to another common aggada, that the sea was first turned into rock. Thus the resulting idea is that the water came out of the rock, and the English translator of Midraš T'hillim renders: "He brought forth for them sweet water from salt rock and they and their cattle drank, as it is said, 'And He brought forth streams from rock.'" (6) This is clearly a parallel to the future world in which a river comes out of the Temple, whose center is a rock --

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[2] Cf. Chapter II, Section 3 above, especially passages (27) and (28).

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the Foundation Stone.[3] The parallel is strengthened by the identification of the streams as "waters of life"(ARN I 33), a phrase commonly used to describe the water coming out of the Messianic Temple.

The same passage says that "Moses took his staff and struck the sea, and it became water-skins . . . and the water-skins would pour out oil and honey into the mouths of infants, who would suckle on them."(7) There is a rather complicated set of motifs here. The idea of water coming out of rock and the action of Moses striking with his staff to get water are both related to the Biblical story of Moses striking a rock to get water.[4] The image of oil and honey is reminiscent of the four rivers of paradise. The infants' drinking, like the infants' being fed from the miraculous trees, shows the importance of the symbolism of infancy, whose significance will appear later. But the principal motif, which ties together all these passages concerning water, is that the same rivers which arise miraculously and nourish man in the future paradise also arise in the sea. However, this water of the past redemption is not infinite: "Sweet water emerged for them, and they took it in their vessels and drank from it, but as soon as it was exhausted they complained loudly."(8)

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[3] According to the aggada, the Foundation Stone is at the center of the earth and it plugs up the hole which leads to the abyss. Thus if the waters which come from the Temple are actually the primal waters, being cosmicized by the sacred center, then they must come through the Foundation Stone. Cf. Chapter II, n.33 above.

[4] Cf. Chapter IV, passage (6) below.

There are two brief mentions of the symbolism of fragrance in connection with the Exodus: "The sea was transformed into all types of spices for Israel."(9) "'And the vines in bloom gave off a fragrance.'-- These are the remnant [of Israel] who repented and were redeemed."(10) Here the significance of fragrance is combined with that of the vine and wine, and both are attributes of those who were redeemed in the Exodus.[5] Another motif which turns up in many texts, but virtually always with the same basic idea, is that of the light of redemption: "The Scripture tells that Israel was in the light while Egypt was in darkness."(Mek. B'-šalaḥ 5) And consequently, "The Egyptians who were placed in darkness could see the Israelites who were placed in light and were eating and drinking and enjoying themselves."(11) This is an obvious parallel to the texts which describe the souls in hell seeing the redeemed in the Garden of Eden.[6]

"There was not one Israelite who did not have 70 donkeys before him which were loaded with silver and gold and precious gems and pearls."(Mek. RS 120) As in the future world, the abundance of natural resources is matched by an abundance of wealth. But where did all this come from? In the case of the past redemption, the answer is quite explicit:

> [Pharaoh] arose and decorated all those horses [with

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[5] Note that redemption comes only to those who have repented -- those who have passed from one religious status to another. This may be connected with the image of blooming -- passing from the potential to the actualized state. On repentance as new creation, cf. PR 169a.

[6] Cf., for example, Mek. RS 60 and PM 342.

> which he chased Israel] with precious stones and pearls. When they came to the sea and God drowned them, all those precious stones and pearls floated up to the shore and were cast upon it, and each day the Israelites came and took them, and they didn't want to move from there. (Tan. B II 63)[7]

Another source (SR 24.1) gives the same basic motif but substitutes gold and silver for gems and pearls. And one text says explicitly that the chariots of the Egyptians "were loaded with silver and gold and precious gems and pearls in order that Israel might take the spoils." (12; emphasis added) Thus the archetypal socio-political symbol of chaos, the forces of Pharaoh, are allowed to surround themselves with symbols of the redeemed state, in order that these symbols could pass to the Israelites, as God had intended all along. The fate of the precious stones themselves seems to give a concrete image of the passage from chaos to paradisal cosmos. And once again the aggada depicts Israel as not only surrounded by symbols of redemption, but transformed into those symbols themselves: "The bundle of pearls -- this is Israel."(13)

In the Garden of Eden there are canopies, variously described and with varying significance, for each of the righteous. In this redemption from Egypt a single canopy, with multiple significances, covers all of Israel: "And the clouds of glory above them so that the sun would not have dominion over them."(14) One text, after describing the cano-

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[7] The last phrase of this passage may point up the stasis of paradise; the people seek a state in which no change takes place and nothing more can happen. Yet this is in tension with the nature of the Exodus redemption, as we shall see.

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pies [Heb. *sukkot*] above the righteous in the future world, asks: "Where were the Israelites when Pharaoh's troops were shooting arrows at them? God had surrounded them with the clouds of glory and covered[8] them over, and Pharaoh's troops did not harm them."(15)

Another kind of canopy was formed from the sea itself: "The sea was split and became a kind of vault [Heb. keîfah]."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 5) The editor adds the note that "the vault was formed by the piercing through of the sea," which seems to give the image of a sort of tunnel. The same text says that "the sea congealed [Heb. *qafa’*, a verbal play on the etymologically unrelated *keîfah*] above them at a point just above two-thirds of its height."(16) Whether this vault or dome created by the sea is a means of protection, like the clouds, is not indicated by the aggada; what its meaning might be will be taken up later.

Another type of protection from the pursuing Egyptians was provided by God: "'And the water a wall for them' -- When Israel descended into the sea Gabriel descended with them and surrounded them and guarded them like a wall." (Y 234) Another text says that "The water was standing like walls."(M. T'murah 111) Not only the protective function, but also the cosmic symbolism, should be noted here. Just like the Garden of Eden or the new Jerusalem, the sea has walls which demarcate between sacred and profane, between

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[8] "Covered" (Heb. *sikkek*) comes from the same root as *sukkot*. This shows that an explicit parallel between the canopies in the future and past redemptions is intended.

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cosmos and chaos. The parallel is made even more precise: "What did God do? He sent Michael, the great heavenly prince, and he became a wall of fire between Israel and Egypt."(17) In the preceding chapter we noted the ambivalence of this image. Here the ambivalence is even more pronounced, because it is the sea itself, the archetype of chaos, along with fire which is transformed into the cosmicizing walls. In fact, one passage even suggests that the sea is transformed into a city or a fortress, symbolic of cosmos surrounded by chaos (cf. Eliade, SP, 49): "God did ten miracles for them upon the sea. He made it into many walls, and there was no wall which did not have a tower. There was no tower which did not have a watchman in it, for the angels would watch over Israel so that they would not be harmed."(ARN II 38) Here the role of cosmos is clearly to defend against the threat of chaos, and it is God and His host who provide this defense.

Finally, there is the interesting aggadic notion that the dome and the walls were transparent: "The sea congealed [Heb. *qafaʾ*] from both sides and became a sort of crystal of glass."(18) The sea "became like a wall for them, and windows were made in it so that the Israelites could see each other . . . . And they walked in the midst of the sea like a man walking around in his own house until they emerged upon dry land."(19) The latter part of this passage stresses the parallel between the "paradise of the sea" and the Garden of Eden, in which each of the righteous has his own house.[9]

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[9] Eliade points out that the house is often assimilated

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The significance of the transparency motif is somewhat difficult to interpret. Certainly there is an increase of light implied, at least in the idea of the glass dome which would let sunlight into an otherwise dark sea. And the idea that all the people could see each other may be related to the unity and solidarity of the people, a theme which will be discussed later on. Perhaps the main point is merely to stress the image of "a man walking around in his own house," a house with windows in it; in other words, even in the midst of the sea, the Israelites lacked for none of the comforts of civilization. To sum up, the overriding meaning of all this imagery of canopies and walls seems to be that of a cosmic construction in the midst of chaos, which protects against chaos but, paradoxically, is sometimes said to be constructed out of the sea, which symbolizes chaos.

One of the characteristics of the paradisal age is an immediate experience of and close contact with God: "In the sea they saw Him openly . . . and the infants would point to Him with their fingers and say, 'This is my God and I will praise Him.'"(20) The latter part of this passage recalls the theme of the banquet of the righteous with God in the future world, at which they are said to point to Him. (The specific role of the infants will be clarified later on.) The idea of direct experience of God is also expressed in the following: "'Show me Your appearance, let me hear Your

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to the cosmos as an imago mundi (SP, 57); this interpretation seems applicable here.

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voice' -- This passage refers to the sea."(21) "And they saw God walking before them, but they saw no traces of His footsteps."(PRE 99a) However, this motif is elaborated much more fully in reference to the revelation at Sinai, and will be discussed in that context. Another theme mentioned briefly in this context and more fully in connection with Sinai is that of the cosmic order formed by the angels. When Israel was standing before the sea, afraid to enter it, "Moses prayed at that time, and God showed them rank upon rank of ministering angels standing before them."(22)

All of the material covered so far in this chapter indicates clearly the belief that the sea was transformed into a paradisal state while the Israelites were within it, and this paradisal state is seen to have many of the religious values connected with redemption which were reviewed in the preceding chapter. The important point to note here is that this paradise exists precisely within the sea, the t'hom, the archetype of chaos. There is no hint of any elimination of the sea; it continues to exist and completely surround the paradisal state.

II

The continued existence of the sea means that the Israelites were still aware of the possibility of chaos affecting them. However, it does not mean that there actually was a power of chaos limiting the perfect order of the paradisal state. In fact, as we saw, symbols of chaos themselves form the walls which protect the paradisal cosmos from the influence of potentiality. When we turn to the process by which the redeemed state is achieved, though, the situation is different -- chaos plays a much more significant role here. Thus, if we are to understand the total relationship of chaos and redemption, we must examine this process closely. Moreover, in the context of Eliade's theory of religion there is an intrinsic link between the process of new creation and the paradisal state to which it gives rise. The act which creates the new cosmos is the creative act of the gods, the act in which absolute reality manifests itself most fully and most immediately. In discussing the future redeemed state we noted references in the aggada to God as Creator and the future world as a sort of illud tempus. In studying the process leading to that state, we must explore this more fully. At the outset, it becomes readily apparent that this process of redemption is depicted as a form of cosmogony. The redeemed world is a new world, a world which has just been created.

One of the universal paradigms of cosmogony is the slaying of a snake or serpent: "The snake symbolizes chaos, the formless, the unmanifested. To behead it is equivalent to an act of creation, passage from the virtual and the amorphous to that which has form."(SP, 55) The legend that God had to destroy a primordial serpent, Rahab, at the time of creation is repeated by the Midraš Vayošaʿ, which goes on in the same chapter to say: "When God wanted to split the sea for Israel so that Egypt would be drowned, Rahab the prince

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of the sea[10] began to speak on behalf of Egypt's welfare . . . . At that instant God raised His hand and struck Rahab and all his army with one blow and killed them and cast them into the depths of the sea."(Vayoša‘ 47) But the serpent, the force of chaos, is also identified with Pharaoh: "'Who rescued you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of Pharaoh' -- from the hand of that great serpent."(23)

"Moses took his staff and struck the sea and it became a great mass of rocks, as it is said, 'You broke the heads of the serpents upon the sea,' and where are the serpents' heads broken? You must say, the serpents' heads are only broken upon the rocks."(24) Here we have an explicit image of the beheading of the serpent, the symbolism which Eliade focuses on in the passage cited above. It is also interesting to note that in this passage (and in many similar passages in other texts) a widespread aggada -- the sea being broken up into rocks -- is based on a preexisting aggada concerning the slaying of the serpent. It is clear that the serpent motif is earlier and widely accepted, because it is used as the proof-text for the rocks motif.

The sea itself is personified in the aggada and is said to have rebelled against being split. Several ideas are advanced as to how this rebellious sea was overcome. In some texts, Moses is said to have done the task himself:

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[10] Here the serpent is explicitly said to personify the sea; the religious significance of the two must be nearly identical. And the serpent represents Egypt before God.

> God said to Moses, "When a servant rebels against his master, what do they do to him?" Moses said to Him, "They strike him with a staff." God said to him, "So should you raise your staff and stretch your hand upon the water and split it." Immediately, "And Moses stretched his hand upon the water and split it."(25)

"What did the sea see when it fled? . . . . The staff of Moses."(PRK 19)[11] But another text has a different opinion: "'The sea saw' --It saw the Ineffable Name engraved upon the staff and fled."(26) Here it is not the staff, but the Name of God, which has the effect of producing cosmos from chaos. Still another view is that the staff was not used at all: "God said to Moses: 'Throw away your staff, so that they won't say, "If it were not for the staff he would not be able to split the sea."'"(SR 21.9) Here the hand of Moses replaces the miraculous staff. In sum, the staff appears to be merely an extension of some other force, be it of the Name of God or the hand of Moses (or perhaps the Tree of Life). But the staff is the most popular instrument of cosmicization in the aggada, partly, no doubt, because of its association with earthly monarchs, and partly because it serves as a concrete symbol unifying all the various notions which it extends.

Yet another viewpoint denies the efficacy of Moses, even with the staff, to effect cosmicization: "What did God do? He put His right hand on the right hand of Moses . . . . Immediately the sea saw God and it fled."(27) "God placed His hand upon Moses' hand and the sea was split."(28) This is a graphic illustration of the point that Moses' hand has supernatural power only insofar as that power is bestowed by God; Moses' hand is only, as it were, an extension of God's hand. Similarly, the Name of God, the staff on which it is engraved, and the Tree of Life are all ultimately extensions of God's power, so that all cosmicization is actually the work of God Himself.

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[11] According to Ginzberg's interpretation of a passage in the second appendix to ARN I, this staff was taken from the wood of the Tree of Life (Ginzberg, Legends, VI, p. 14). Cf. Chapter II, Section 10 above on the staff as a source of order and life.

The personified sea, according to many aggadot, acknowledges this truth. It says to Moses, "I am not fleeing from before you, but 'from the presence of the Lord of the boundaries of the earth' -- from the presence of the Lord who created the earth."(29)[12] God's role as Creator is explicitly said to be the cause of this new cosmogony. The fact that it is God Himself who performs the redemption is again emphasized; the angels volunteered to rescue Israel from Egypt, but "God answered them, 'I Myself will descend and protect My children.'"(Vayošaʿ 45) Finally, an interesting parallel between Moses, the cosmicizer, and the sea is established: God tells Moses, "You are under my authority and the sea is under My authority, and I have made you a commander over it."(30) Moses, in himself, has no greater power of cosmicization than the sea. But God, who controls both cosmos and chaos, chooses to make Moses an instrument of cosmos and to make cosmos rule over chaos in the act of re-

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[12] Note that in this midraš creation is equated with setting and maintaining boundaries.

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demption. Once again the cosmogonic power is seen to reside solely in God and to be derivative of the power and will of God.

The actual physical changes in the sea are described in some detail, all emphasizing the basic idea of cosmogony. "Moses took the staff and struck the sea and before them it turned into many pieces [Heb. *g'zarîm*]."(31) "He divided the sea for them into twelve divisions, as it is said, 'To the One who splits the Reed Sea into pieces [Heb. *g'zarîm*]."(32) The emphasis here is on the basic act of creating forms and setting limits in a previously undifferentiated and homogeneous mass. The twelve divisions are said to be "a parallel to the twelve tribes of Israel."(Vayošaʿ 51)[13] A variant of this is the idea that the sea was "divided into twelve roads."(33) It is well known that in many religious traditions the passage from profane to sacred, and especially through chaos to a cosmic center, is conceived as a religious path or road (cf. Eliade, PCR, 380-382), and here certainly the symbolism is one of a road from the chaos of Egypt, through the chaos of the sea, to the new cosmos of the redeemed state.

This motif of the roads through the sea is expressed in a more complex manner: "On the very day that the waters were gathered together, they congealed and became twelve paths which are for the twelve tribes."(34) However, in the context of this aggada it seems that the day meant is the third day of the original creation. To understand this passage we must look at another aggadic idea:

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[13] In the aggada, "the twelve tribes" seems to represent an idealization of perfect order in the social dimension of life, and the fact that there are just twelve divisions intensifies the image of cosmic order.

> Moses said to God: "You tell me to split the sea and make it dry land, but behold it is written, 'For I have set the sand as a boundary to the sea,' and behold You have sworn that You would never split it" . . . . God said to him: "Thus I stipulated from the beginning that I would split it." -- And thus there is no change in the order of creation here. (34a; the last phrase is a comment by the editor.)

The aggada has Moses raise the possibility that a new act of creation is actually an act of chaos, because it negates the existing order of the cosmos. But this possibility is rejected, on the grounds that since there is only one cosmic order (because there is only one Creator), any creative act of the Creator must necessarily be rooted in, and a confirmation of, the original cosmogony. Thus the splitting of the sea was actually accomplished at the time of the original creation, and it is in a sense an integral part of that creation. This explains why twelve paths had to be made on the third day of the original creation.[14] Finally, there is an interesting variation on the idea of roads in the sea: "Moses took his staff and struck the sea and it was filled with many perforations."(35) Earlier we noted the apparent image of a tunnel through the sea, and here there is perhaps an image of many tunnels, combining the motif of roads and the motif of being totally surrounded by the sea.

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[14] In this motif the original cosmogony and the cosmogony of the Exodus seem to be almost fused, thus intensifying the idea that the Exodus is a new creation of a world.

But the most important physical change in the sea is the very fact of its being transformed into dry land, and this is explicitly said to be a new creation: "He split the sea for them and created for them a new earth from the sea." (PH 38) God says: "If I made dry land for the first Adam, who was only one man . . . shall I not make the sea dry land for this holy congregation?"(36) "At that time God created for them a new creation, in order to say, 'For these people I created a world.'"(37) The seven days of the Passover holiday, commemorating the Exodus, are said explicitly to be a parallel to the seven days of creation.(SR 19.7) And in the context of the Exodus the aggada testifies to God's unique power of cosmicization: "He creates forms out of water . . . . He creates forms out of darkness."(38)

The universal scale of this new creation is noted: "All the waters in the universe were split . . . . Even the upper waters and the lower waters were split."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 5) "All the fountains of water and all the gathered waters in the world and even the water in pitchers and in vats and in gourds and in all the vessels in the world were split and separated at that moment."(39) Elaborating on the idea that the "lower" waters were split is the statement that, "All the springs of the abyss were divided;"(40) in other words, the cosmogonic act of God reaches even into the archetypal realm of chaos itself. Thus God's redemptive act on behalf of Israel is seen as a new creation and reaffirmation of cos-

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mos on every level of the universe. "What is the meaning of 'the wilderness of Šur?'[15] Until Israel went out of Egypt the world was wilderness; as soon as they went out the world became a habitable place [Heb. *šur*]."(SR 24.4)

The fact that all of this occurred only because of Israel is emphasized: God says, "Although the Egyptians are idolaters and adulterers and murderers, I only destroyed them for your sake."(41) The destruction of chaos and consequent cosmicization is not an automatic procedure; it needs a people on earth who can be its motive force and agent, and this is the role accorded by the aggada to the people of Israel. There is a direct relationship between this cosmogony and the sacred history of the Israelite nation: "'This month [Heb. *ḥodeš*] shall be for you the first of months' -- God said to Israel: 'My children, there is a renewal [Heb. *ḥîduš*] of redemption for you here.'"(42)[16]

The redemption of Israel is described in several symbolic motifs, all of which revolve around the idea of new birth, which is an expression on the human level of new creation on the cosmic level (cf. Eliade, RSI, xii-xiv). "What is the meaning of 'A nation from the midst of a nation?' "Like a man who draws the fetus out of the womb of the cow,

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[15] This is the wilderness which the Israelites entered immediately after crossing the sea; cf. Chapter IV, Part III below.

[16] Note here that the renewal of redemption is specifically identified with the beginning of the year. Thus the Passover holiday, at the beginning of the year, recreates the moment of redemption. This is in accord with one of Eliade's basic tenets -- that the beginning of the year is the time

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and it says, 'And God took you and drew you out of the iron furnace.'" (Mek. B'šalaḥ 7) This parallel between birth and the smelting process (cf. Eliade, FC, 57) is also noted in the following passage:

> We know that there is pain to the animal which has the fetus drawn from it. How do we know that there is pain also to the one who draws it out? As it is said, "And He took you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt" -- Like a man who takes the fire from the furnace without tongs or rags, thus, as it were, God did for Israel. (44)

The same idea is expressed in a different symbolic motif, the rebirth of nature in the spring: God tells Israel that their days of slavery are fulfilled with the Biblical phrase, "For behold the winter has passed," (45) and Israel says, "'I am the lily [Heb. *ḥabaṣelet*] of Šaron' -- I am she who was hidden in the shadow[17] of the sea, and in a short time I blossomed with good deeds like a lily." (46) In this motif the pain of God in redeeming Israel is expressed thus: "Just as this rose which lies among thorns is difficult for the owner to pluck, so the redemption of Israel was difficult for God." (Šir R. II,2,2) The idea here seems to be that since God Himself carried out the redemption, He had to "descend" (cf. Vayoša‘ 45 cited above) into the chaos of Egypt and in some measure experience that chaos Himself; even though God rules both chaos and cosmos, He can feel pain in this experience.[18]

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in which the original cosmogony and paradisal state are experienced again.

[17] "Hidden in the shadow" (Heb. *ḥabuyah* *b'ṣelo*) is a verbal play on *ḥabaṣelet*.

[18] The idea of God's pain is a minor motif in the

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The idea of blossoming is connected with another major symbol of rebirth, the dawn: "'And it came to pass in the morning watch' -- This was at the sunrise [Heb. haneṣ haḥamah, literally, 'the blossoming of the sun.'] "(47) "When God punishes the wicked He only punishes them in the morning."(48)[19] In the aggada Israel is often compared to a dove: "Just as this dove brings light to the world, so Israel brings light to the world. And when does the dove bring light to the world? In the days of Noah."(Šir. R. IV, 1,2) This refers to the dove sent out after the flood had abated (Gen. 8:11); thus the dove, Israel, and the coming of light are all seen as symbols of the end of chaos and the birth of a new cosmos. Another cosmogonic motif mentioned briefly here, but more often in connection with Sinai, is that of the sacred marriage. God says to Israel: "They give a maiden twelve months to provide her dowry before her fiance comes to claim her. But I didn't do that; while you were still working in mud and bricks I jumped in and redeemed you."(49) Here God and Israel are depicted as acting together to bring about the new creation.

A number of similar symbols of renewal and rebirth are found in the aggadot describing the "song at the sea," which the Israelites sang after reaching the other side

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aggada. However, it may be related to the idea of the exile of the Šekînah after the destruction of the Temple, which is a significant theme in rabbinic theology. Cf. Sifre B'midbar 1 and 84; TB Ber. 3a.

[19] Cf. Chapter II, Section 13 above.

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in safety. First, the aggada speaks to God: "Although You are eternal, Your throne was not established and You were not acknowledged in Your world until Your children sang the song."(SR 23.1) "As soon as the nations heard that Pharaoh and his army were destroyed in the sea and the kingship of Egypt had ceased and judgment was pronounced on their idols, they all rejected their own idols and all opened their mouths and praised God."(Mek. Širtaʾ 8) The acknowledgement of the one God -- depicted in the image of the "enthronement" of God -- is an acceptance of the single true cosmic order and its ruler; not until the throne is established can the new cosmos be established,[20] and this occurs when Israel sings the song and the nations praise God as well. In singing the song, the Israelites must join the nations in rejecting idolatry: "An idol had been in Israel's hands [in the sea] and at that moment Moses removed it."(50) The completion of the crossing is "likened to a woman who had been menstruating, and her menstrual period was now over and she was purified."(51) "They purified their hearts and sang the song, for thus it is written: 'And the people saw God and they believed in Him,' and afterwards, 'Then they sang.'" (SR 22.3) Here the song follows the purification, which is in some sense equivalent to experience of and faith in God and to the rejection of idolatry.[21]

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[20] God's throne, which in the redeemed state coincides with the Temple, is symbolic of the sacred center. Thus it must be established firmly if the cosmos which it founds is to be firm.

[21] In Eliade's view, purification is a mark of new

But the most complex symbolism concerning the song has to do with the theme of infants. In crossing the sea all of the Israelites are said to have assumed the status of infants (cf. passage 43), those in a state of new spiritual birth (cf. Eliade, RSI, *passim*). Thus there is an emphasis on the role of the infants in praising God for this redemption. "The baby sitting on its mother's knees and the infant suckling at its mother's breasts opened their mouths and said, 'This is my God and I will praise Him.'" But the same passage immediately goes on to introduce a new note: "Even the embryos in their mothers' wombs opened their mouths and sang the song."(M. Šir 38b) Here the infants and embryos are pictured as joining together to praise God.

The same idea is expressed in the aggadic idea that when God asked for guarantors of the people's faith in Him, He would accept only the infants and embryos: "Immediately they brought the infants in their mothers' wombs and from their mothers' breasts, and their wombs became like glass so that they saw God from within the wombs and could speak with Him."(51a) Here the difference between infants and embryos is largely ignored; both are symbolic of the experience of potentiality, and it is they whom God chooses to represent the people as a whole. This passage also stresses the parallel between the embryos and the Israelites in the sea: each

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creation because it is an elimination of past chaos, allowing the new cosmos to be founded unimpeded by chaos.(CH, 54) Here purification would be equivalent to the elimination of idolatry, and it must occur before the new cosmos -- symbolized by the singing of the song -- can be founded.

is in a chaotic state surrounded by fluid, each can see through a dome of glass, and each sees God directly, which seeing is a prerequisite to singing the song of praise. Thus if the Israelites as infants are in a state of being newly-born, as embryos they are in a state preceding birth. This indicates that the new cosmos inhabited by the redeemed Israelites is not yet complete; there is more which will come to birth in the future.

III

But to understand fully the motif of the infants we must look at another aggadic theme which can serve as an introduction to the symbolism of chaos. The infants are said to exclaim, "This is my God," which the aggada takes to be a statement of recognition. But how did the infants recognize God? Had they seen Him before? In fact, according to the aggada, they had. The Talmud states that "when God revealed Himself at the sea, they recognized Him first," to which Rashi adds the explanation, "because they had already seen His Šekînah."(TB Soṭah 11b) This had occurred when the Egyptians decreed that every male Israelite child was to be killed. As the children themselves tell the story in the aggada: "When the Egyptians saw us they came to kill us, but You in Your great mercy commanded the earth and it swallowed us and disgorged us in another place."(52)[22] Another version of the same motif is given: "They were swallowed in the ground and [the Egyptians] would bring oxen and plow upon their backs . . . . And after [the Egyptians] went away they would sprout and grow like the grass of the field."(53) This is similar to an idea mentioned in the first chapter; life cannot be repaired, but only re-created, and thus the sick and dead are placed in the earth so that they can repeat the archetypal gesture of the vegetative world in dying and being reborn.

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[22] This is a concrete carrying out of the act symbolized by the humi positio, studied by Eliade (MDM, 166). The newly-born infant is taken back into the womb of all

If, in fact, the infants of the song aggadot are symbolic of the people as a whole, then there is a very strong suggestion in this aggadic motif of initiatory death and rebirth accomplished by the people in a concrete manner.[23] At any rate, this initiatory experience seems to be in some way a foreshadowing of the redemption of the entire people. The parallel is even more pointed in another variant: "All the children whom they threw into the Nile did not die, for the Nile discharged them and threw them into the wilderness of Egypt."(PRE 99b) Substituting the sea for the Nile and Šur for Egypt, this passage would be a description of the fundamental events of the Exodus. If we recall

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things -- the earth -- and then is reborn in a "valid" birth. (MDM, 167)

[23] "Initiatory" death is distinguished by Eliade from natural death because it always functions as the prerequisite enabling man to achieve some new condition: "Initiatory death is thus a recommencement, never an end. In no rite or myth do we find the initiatory death as something *final*, but always as the condition *sine qua non* of a transition to another mode of being."(MDM, 224)

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the power of water to dissolve the old and give birth to the new, the initiatory significance of the passage is quite clear.

The aggada goes on to explain how these infants, abandoned in the wilderness, could be fed: "God made breasts grow out of the rocks and they suckled them."(54) "He gathered for each one two breast-shaped stones[24] -- one of oil and one of honey, as it is said, 'And He suckled you on honey from the rock and oil from the stone of flint.'"(55) Like the rocks in the sea which poured out fresh water and oil and honey, and the rock in the desert which gives water, these rocks too are endowed by God with a miraculous power to nourish. And in each case the people are nourished by God in the midst of chaos, during a passage from the unredeemed state to the actualization of redemptive cosmos.

Just as these infants begin their process of redemption in the chaos of the embryonic state, so the Israelites as a whole begin their process of redemption in the chaos of Egypt. We have already seen several references to Egypt as a symbol of chaos: Pharaoh is the archetypal serpent, Israel was drawn out of the womb or the furnace, the whole world was wilderness when Israel was in Egypt. The aggada says that a portion of the Israelites died in Egypt (the exact number is disputed), "And when did they die? In the days of darkness when Egypt was sunk in darkness."(56) Thus the

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[24] "Breast-shaped stones" is in Hebrew *ʿagolîm*; the translation here follows the suggestion of a note in the published ET.

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plague which was the archetype of chaos affected the Israelites as well as the Egyptians. "Israel in Egypt was like a pile of stones, as it is said, 'A garden shut up is my sister, my bride, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.'"(SR 20.5) This is a stark contrast to the images of fertility which we have seen earlier in this chapter. The symbolism of Egypt as a womb is made explicit: "What is the meaning of 'From the midst of a nation?' That they [Israel] were swallowed up in their [Egypt's] womb."(57)

Again following the parallel of the infants, whose burial in the form-absorbing earth is a sort of dissolution into chaos, the people as a whole find that their redemption begins with an intensification of chaos. When they left Egypt and headed toward the sea, they soon found themselves in difficult straits: "Haḥîrot was on one side and Migdol on the other side, the sea before them and the Egyptians behind them."(58) Haḥîrot and Migdol are two Egyptian cities; the former is of particular interest because it contains Pî-Haḥîrot, literally "the mouth of Haḥîrot," whose description is rather elusive. According to Ginzberg,[25] it is a place "where two rectangular rocks form an opening, within which the great sanctuary of Baʿal-Ẓepon was situated." If this description is correct, then it bears an interesting resemblance to the Symplegades motif which Eliade has studied.(RSI, 64-66) The basic meaning of this motif is the need to transcend the human mode of being in order to make

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[25] Cf. Legends III, 10 and references ad loc.

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an "impossible passage" through a narrow opening with danger on either side. One who accomplishes this feat escapes the threat of chaos and attains to the values of the spiritual world.[26] Another symbol expressing the same basic theme is that of the narrow gate (SP, 181), and we find this too used in the context of the passage through the sea: "'This is the gate to God, the righteous may enter through it' -- What does it say about the faithful? 'Open the gates and they will enter.'"(Mek. B'šalaḥ 7)

In the aggada the danger is intensified; even the forward passage of the Symplegades-type hero seems to be impossible. "Israel saw that they were surrounded on all four sides: the sea closing in and the enemy pursuing and the wild beasts from the wilderness."(59) In this more characteristic passage the two Egyptian cities are replaced by the motif of wild beasts on either side. How did the beasts come to be there? Two views are given: "Pharaoh called to all his soldiers and said: 'Don't you know that Baʿal Ẓepon has gathered all the lions that are in the wilderness against Israel?'"(SR 15.15) "As soon as Israel saw the sea raging and the enemy pursuing they turned toward the wilderness; immediately God summoned the wild beasts and didn't leave them any way to get out."(60) Thus the people are totally surrounded by the forces of chaos, and this situation is described alternatively as brought about by God or by the Egyptian idol, the direct antithesis of God. Apparently God may cooperate with His enemies, the forces of chaos, when He desires an increase of chaos for the Israelites.

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[26] The passage through Pî-Haḥîrot would necessarily be a passage through chaos, since the temple of the great Egyptian idol fills the narrow opening. The idea here would seem to be that one can escape chaos only by passing through it.

"To what was Israel comparable at that moment? To a dove which fled from the hawk and entered a cleft in a rock, only to find a snake hissing at it."(61) In this context the image of Israel as a bird -- in particular a dove -- is stressed. "Just as this dove stretches out its neck to be slaughtered, so was Israel."(62) "Just as this bird is in the hunter's hand -- if he chooses he can kill it and if he chooses it will live -- so was Israel caught in the hand of Egypt."(MT 107.4) Thus Israel, like the bird, seeks to attain to the spiritual world,[27] but it is in imminent danger of death as the consequence of this attempt. According to the last passage cited the threat comes from the Egyptians. But in line with the idea that God brought the four-sided chaos, there is another point of view which must be explained.

When the Israelites saw the danger they faced, they divided into four groups: "One says 'Let us fall into the sea;' one says 'Let us return to Egypt;' one says 'Let us wage a war;' one says 'Let us cry out.'"(63) The first three groups opt for various forms of chaos, but the fourth chooses to turn to God. "What did they do? They raised their eyes

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[27] Eliade stresses that the bird, because of its flight, symbolizes the attainment of a higher spiritual state; cf. MDM, 105-110 and Chapter II, Section 9 of this dissertation.

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to their Father in heaven and cried out."(Tan. Šofṭim 13) This was fortunate, because God later tells Moses, "Were it not for the fact that you cried out, I would have already eliminated you from the world."(64) Here, the death threat comes not from Egypt but from God Himself, and the only thing that saves Israel is their crying out to God for help.[28] In fact, this explains why God brought this situation of chaos upon them: "Why did God do this to them? Because God desired their prayer . . . God wanted to hear their voice once more, but they were not willing."(65)

It would appear that in the aggada, as in the Symplegades motif, a situation apparently impossible of escape -- a situation which threatens imminent death -- is necessary to establish a relationship between the human and the spiritual, a relationship which is the first step in the passage to a new creation on either the personal or cosmic scale.[29] In this case the essence of the relationship is man's acceptance of the one true cosmic order which is reaffirmed in the new creation. One opinion goes so far as to say that the situation was actually impossible of escape: "When Israel saw the Egyptians coming after them, they were

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[28] In other words, if any of the first three groups had won out and the people had chosen some form of chaos, God would have dissolved the people. This illustrates the principle that chaos brings chaos upon itself, as we shall see more fully below.

[29] Eliade points out that in the Samkhya philosophy (the basis of classical yoga) "only he who has lost all hope is happy." (YI, 29) Cf. also TB San. 97a: the Messiah will not come "until they despair of redemption."

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so frightened that their souls burst out."(66)[30] And the significance of this death is explained in terms of the bird imagery: "Just as this [sacrificial] dove atones for sin, so Israel atones for the nations . . . so that the world will not be destroyed," to which the traditional commentary adds: "So that the world will not become chaos [Heb. *tohu*]."(67) The death of Israel, whether actual or symbolic,[31] is a means of establishing cosmos and escaping the universal chaos which had ruled before.

Prior to the crossing of the sea itself, one other prerequisite was laid upon the Israelites: "When Moses said to them, 'Thus has God said to me in a single word: "No uncircumcised person shall eat of it,"'[32] immediately each and every one took his sword upon his thigh and circumcised himself."(Šir R. III, 7,4) "'To the One who divides the Reed Sea into divisions' -- for in the Aramaic language they call circumcision 'division;' the sea was split by the merit of circumcision."(68) If, as Eliade claims, circumcision is

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[30] The phrase "their souls burst out" can be idiomatic for either fainting or dying. The phrase will appear again in Chapter VI, Part III with the latter meaning definitely intended, but here there is no corroborating evidence to prove that it does mean death. The latter meaning is probable, however, as the context here is parallel to that in Chapter VI. Cf. Abraham Eben-Shoshan, *Hamîlon Heḫadaš* (7 vols.; Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, Ltd., 1967), Vol. V, p. 2149 and Vol. III, p. 978.

[31] Surviving the "impossible passage" of the Symplegades motif is a symbolic death because, although one does not die physically, one confronts the imminence of death directly; in surviving this ordeal, one "dies" to the human condition and attains a transcendent spiritual condition.

[32] This commandment refers to the eating of the paschal lamb on the night before the Exodus. Cf. Ex. 12:48.

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"equivalent to a mystical death,"(RSI, 23) we have here another example of initiatory death which must precede and enable the act of redemption. It is particularly interesting that according to Eliade (Ibid.), wild beasts are often the agents of circumcision. But whether the wild beasts mentioned in the aggada are to be connected with this motif or not, in any event it is God who directly brings about the circumcision.

Arriving at the sea, Moses followed God's instructions and attempted to divide it. But, as we noted above, the sea resisted. "The combat with Rahab presupposes the reactualization of primordial chaos."(Eliade, CH, 60) Or at least it presupposes an attempt by chaos to reassert itself and overcome the forces of cosmicization. "It did not want to be split. Why? Because they [i.e., Israel] were rebellious. It said, 'They are rebellious; should I then be divided?'"(69) The refusal of the Israelites (at least three out of four groups) to submit to the force of universal cosmos causes an intensification of the force of chaos.[33]

Another explanation of the sea's rebellion is given: The sea said to Moses: "Should I be split for you? I am greater than you, for I was created on the third day and you were created on the sixth day."(SR 21.6) The validity of this proposition is accepted, at least by that portion of the aggada which insists on Moses' helplessness in the face of the sea: "Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, but it

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[33] Cf. n. 28 above.

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refused to be split; he showed it the coffin of Joseph and the staff with the Ineffable Name engraved on it, but it refused."(70) "Moses said to it, 'In the Name of God divide!' but it refused to obey him; he showed it the staff but it refused to obey him."(71) The point here is that neither Moses nor the various extensions of God's power will suffice; only the actual appearance of God Himself is powerful enough to overcome the archetype of chaos in the process of cosmogony. Therefore the Israelites can depend on nothing except God Himself to save them.

Standing before the rebellious and undivided sea, the twelve tribes had to decide whether they would in fact trust God's saving power and enter the water. Two distinct opinions are offered in the very same aggadic passage:

> When Israel stood at the sea, the tribes tried to overcome each other -- this one saying, "I will descend first into the sea " and this one saying, "I will descend first into the sea." . . . . It did not happen that way; rather, this one saying, "I will not descend first into the sea" and this one saying, "I will not descend first into the sea."(72, 73)

Each opinion has further support: "They rebelled at the sea, because they did not want to descend."(74) "When Israel was standing and disputing at the sea, this one saying, 'I will descend first' and this one saying, 'I will descend first,' Moses spoke to the tribe of Reuben but they didn't obey; to Simeon but they didn't obey."(75)[34]

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[34] The Hebrew text of passage (75) leaves room for interpretation, but it allows the supposition that the phrase "I will descend first" may actually be a question. Literally the texts say only "I descend first," and there are no question marks in aggadic texts. It is more likely that Moses

In any event, the best interpretation of this theme may be found by accepting both of these viewpoints simultaneously; there is both a desire and a fear expressed here. This resembles the well known mysterium tremendum et fascinans elucidated by Rudolph Otto,[35] the ambivalent attitude which man takes toward the numinous, the sacred. To be more precise, the tribes are attracted by their belief in God's saving action but are terrified by the chaos of the sea. Thus, if we are presented here with a single experience of the numinous as Otto describes it, then both God and the sea are being experienced as two aspects of a single religious experience. In fact, since we have seen that it was God Himself who put Israel in the midst of chaos for His own purposes, the aggada seems to hold that God controlled the sea at all times. Certainly He could have split it earlier and saved the tribes this ambivalent experience. The fright at the sea is actually fright at one of God's own actions, and the idea of a single ambivalent experience of the sacred seems to be strengthened.[36]

The problem of who would enter the sea first apparently became so heated that "they all took up stones and

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commanded the tribes in question to enter the sea but they refused than that he ordered them to refrain.

[35] Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy, trans. John W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), Chs. 4-6.

[36] Eliade accepts the ambivalence of the experience of the sacred, in which man "hopes to secure and strengthen his own reality . . . [yet] fears he may lose it completely if he is totally lifted to a plane of being higher than his natural profane state."(PCR, 17)

stoned each other."(76) As to who actually entered first, there are at least three opinions: "The tribe of Judah, which jumped in first, sanctified the name of God."(74) "What did the tribes of Benjamin and Judah do? They sanctified the name of God."(Tan. B I, 208) "The tribe of Benjamin jumped in and descended into the sea first . . . and the princes of Judah stoned them."(TB Soṭah 37a) This last passage is difficult to interpret, especially in light of the view that, "On the merit of that stoning God dressed them [i.e., Judah] in royal purple and gave them the kingship." (77)[37] In any event, the entering of the sea was certainly a time of conflict and discord between the tribes. Another very important point in these passages is the phrase "sanctified the name of God," which is often idiomatic in rabbinic texts for death by martyrdom for the sake of one's faith.

There is no doubt that, according to the aggada, whoever descended into the sea at that moment was in imminent danger of death: "Naḥšon ben ʿAmînadab [a prince of Judah] jumped in and descended first into the sea, and he fell into the waves of the sea. About him it says: 'Save me God, for the waters have come unto my soul, I am drowning in the mud of the depths . . . . Let not the depths swallow me nor the

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[37] The meaning of the stoning incident seems to me to depend on some other piece of tradition which has not gotten into our aggadic texts; most probably it would have to do with a command of God concerning which tribe should enter first. If Benjamin failed to wait for or obey such a command, then the stoning would be meritorious. It is possible that passage (76) is a late tradition derived from this earlier tradition of the stoning of Benjamin. However, the texts provide no solid evidence for the interpretation of this motif.

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mouth of the pit close in on me.'"(Mek. B'šalaḥ 6) "God said to Moses: 'My beloved are drowned in the sea and you stand and pray!'"(78) "The sea was not split for them until they were in it up to their noses."(79)

> When Israel entered the sea, Mount Moriah had already been uprooted from its place . . . . It was as if Isaac was bound and placed on the altar and as if Abraham was stretching out his hand and taking the knife to slaughter his son. God said to Moses: "My children are in great distress, the sea is closing in, and the enemy pursuing, and you stand and make long prayers!"(80)

This analogy seems to indicate that the Israelites, like Isaac, were asked to face imminent death as a part of their faith relationship with God.

The intensity of the danger is indicated by the aggadic belief that even the angels who had descended to help Israel were put in the same danger: "Then the angels said, 'Save us, God, for the waters have come unto the soul.'"(81) This Biblical phrase, "the waters have come unto the soul," is used in conjunction with another text -- "To the One who divides the Reed Sea into divisions" -- and the comment is added, "These are the little ones -- as soon as they came to be circumcised they fled."(82)[38] This passage seems to support the view that there is a direct parallel between the danger of drowning and the danger of being circumcised, and it may explain why the former immediately follows the latter in the aggadic narrative.

Of course, at the last moment God saved Israel from immediate death by parting the sea. However, their dangers

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[38] Cf. passage (68) above, where "division" means circumcision.

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were by no means over. As we saw above, they were totally surrounded by the waters of the sea, above and below as well as on either side. "The abyss [Heb. *t'hom*] arched over them above, and Israel passed through it."(83) "The depths [Heb. *t'homot*] were congealed in the midst of the sea."(84) To make it clear that the sea spoken of here is actually the archetypal chaos, the aggada says, "The sea is the equivalent opposite[39] of all creation."(85) And this chaos was apparently intensified while the Israelites were in the midst of it: "The heart of the sea congealed, and the sea rose and completely filled its banks."(86) "The waves rose to a height of 600 miles."(87) "The water rose to a height of 1,600 miles, and all the world was frightened. Terror and trembling seized it."(Vayošaʿ 52) The symbolism of this immersion in flooding waters is rather obvious, but its importance in the aggada warrants some added emphasis:

> Immersion is the equivalent, at the human level, of death, and at the cosmic level, of the cataclysm (the Flood) which periodically dissolves the world into the primeval ocean . . . what is immersed in it "dies," and, rising again from the water, is like a child without any sin or any past, able to receive a new revelation and begin a new and *real* life. (PCR, 194; parentheses and emphasis in original.)[40]

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[39] "Equivalent opposite" is in Hebrew *k'neged*; the translation here is an approximation of an untranslatable idiom.

[40] A distinction should be drawn between the Israelites actually immersed in the sea before it was split and surrounded by -- but not actually immersed in -- the sea after it was split. Eliade's words cited here apply more especially to the former state. But the Israelites' experience even in the divided sea seems to be a symbolic death (cf. n. 31 above), and the images which Eliade uses here are all found in the aggadic exposition of the passage through the

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The danger of imminent death was even greater because these were not merely waters; they had a will of their own: "Even the sea was filled with wrath at them and sought to destroy them."(Mek. RS, 68) "And how do we know that even the sea was filled with wrath at them? As it is said, 'And the waters were a wall to them' -- Do not read 'wall' [Heb. ḥomah] but rather 'wrath' [Heb. ḥeîmah]."(88) Why were the waters angry? "Because Samaʾel[41] descended and said before God: 'Didn't Israel worship idols in Egypt? And now you are doing a miracle for them?' And he called to the prince of the sea, who was filled with wrath at them and tried to drown them."(Y 234) Thus the imminence of death is not merely a necessary part of the act of redemption. It is also an inevitable consequence of the Israelites' embracing of chaos (i.e., idolatry) in the past. The aggada emphasizes this point by personifying the sea, giving it a will, and making it act according to the divine principle that chaos brings chaos upon itself. Again, God and the sea seem to cooperate and act according to the same rule. However, as we shall see, this cooperation has a limit.

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divided sea. Perhaps the total experience can best be understood by seeing the actual and "symbolic" immersions as two aspects of a single experience, which Eliade's words seem to describe aptly.

[41] Samaʾel is identical with Satan, the accusing angel. It is interesting that Reuben Alcalay, _The Complete Hebrew-English Dictionary_ (Tel-Aviv: Massadah Publishing Co., 1969), p. 1784, offers as the conjectured etymology of this name _sam ʾel_ as "the venom of God," although Ginzberg (V, 121), citing medieval sources, gives _someʾ ʾel_ as "the blind one of God." Eben-Shoshan, _Hamîlon Heḥadaš_, IV, p. 1811, supports Alcalay. Ginzberg in _Legends_, V, p. 121, citing medieval sources, gives _someʾ ʾel_ as "the blind one of God."

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Despite their faith in God, the Israelites were frightened by the sea and the prospect of drowning in it: "Israel started to come into the Reed Sea, but they turned back, fearful lest the waters return and come down on them." (89) They said, "When the water was below and the air above, we couldn't cross, and now that the water is above and the air below, how much more so."(ARN II 38)[42] But it was not only the water that threatened them: "As soon as they descended into the sea, it was full of mud . . . and Reuben said to Simeon, 'In Egypt in mud and in the sea in mud. In Egypt in mortar [Heb. ḥomer] and bricks, and in the sea "the foaming [Heb. ḥomer] of mighty water."'"(90) "'And He made the sea dry land [Heb. ḥarabah]' -- He made it like a ruined wasteland [Heb. ḥarbah]."(91) We noted above that the sea had been divided into pieces, "and from the sea between the pieces flames descended and licked them."(92) Here the experience of the Israelites in the sea is described in three different images, all symbolic of chaos. All in all, Israel was "like a bird caught in a man's hand -- if he squeezes his hand just a little bit, he will kill her."(Mek. RS 68) The metaphor here is the same as that used for the four-sided chaos discussed above. But in this instance the danger comes from the waters of the sea, rather than the Egyptians.

In fact, in the meantime the Egyptians had entered

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[42] Note that there is an inversion of the natural order here, which will appear again in the aggada as a symbol of chaos.

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the sea pursuing the Israelites, and they found themselves subject to the same conditions: "Upon these and upon those the sea closed in from all four sides."(SR 22.2) "The Scripture tells that Israel was placed in judgment at that time, to decide whether they would be rescued or destroyed with Egypt."(93) Here we arrive at the crux of the matter. Israel is faced with the threat of total dissolution in chaos; i.e., death. On the one hand, the threat seems to come from the sea. But the sea's threat is negated by the act of God: "At that time the prince of the sea was filled with wrath at them and tried to drown them until God rebuked him and dried him up."(95) On the other hand, the real threat comes from God Himself. God is at all times in control of the drama of redemption, and He chooses to put both Israel and Egypt in the same situation: "God said: 'Just as I rejoiced at the destruction of Egypt in the sea, so I would have rejoiced to destroy Israel."(96)[43] A less harsh opinion reads: "Just as I rejoiced at the destruction of Egypt, so I almost rejoiced to destroy Israel."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 7)

There is no doubt here that in experiencing an overwhelming measure of chaos the Israelites are experiencing an act of God. Chaos in itself has no power over them, unless God chooses to grant it power.[44] The ambivalence of the ex-

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[43] The text literally reads "the enemies of Israel" rather than "Israel," but as the English translator notes, this is a well known euphemism for Israel in rabbinic literature. Cf. Mek. RS 68, which confirms this interpretation.

[44] Thus the waters in themselves are no danger; it is only what God might do by means of the waters that is

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perience of God may be expressed in the following passage: "Israel says to them, 'My beloved [i.e., God] is white and ruddy' -- white to me in Egypt and ruddy to the Egyptians . . . white to me in the sea and ruddy to me in the sea . . . white to me in the world to come and ruddy to me in this world."(97) The English translator of this passage adds two notes: first, that white symbolizes God's mercy and ruddy His justice, and second, that the phrase "ruddy to me in the sea" should be emended to "ruddy to Egypt." However, this emendation may not be correct (he gives no textual evidence for it), and if not, it would preserve the ambivalence of the religious experience precisely in the locale with which we are dealing.

It is perfectly logical that both Israel and Egypt should find themselves together with the sea closing in on them, because, according to the rule of chaos bringing chaos upon itself, both were liable to such punishment. Egypt is, of course, the socio-political archetype of chaos in the Exodus narratives. But their particular sin was to attempt to dissolve the Israelites -- quite literally -- in chaos. "They wanted to drown Israel in water; therefore [God] drowned them in water, since God only judges man measure for measure."(98) "He turned the wheel upon them so that their wickedness would be turned against them."(99) The image of the wheel has a two-fold meaning. It represents a sort of "karmic" law that one's actions will be returned to him in the completion of

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really threatening. This point tends to mitigate the distinction raised in n. 40 between actual immersion and being surrounded by water; in either case the risk is the same.

the cycle (i.e., chaos begets chaos), and it also conveys the idea of a new creation and a new religio-historical cycle with the emergence of the Israelites and the drowning of the Egyptians.[45] A variant on the theme of Egypt's sin is: "In the measure to which a man metes out, so it is meted out to him . . . . [Pharaoh] made the Israelites work very hard, so You hardened the sea for them and made it like mud, and they were drowned in it; the term 'drowning' [Heb. *ṭ'biyah*] only refers to drowning in mud."(100)

But Israel, too, had been a force of chaos, insofar as they worshipped idols and refused to acknowledge the proper order of the universe; i.e., the sole kingship of the one God. The aggada generally is unanimous that not only did they worship idols in Egypt, but even "when they passed through the sea, the idol of Micah went with them."(101)[46] And as we saw, one of the cosmicizing acts of the Exodus was the removal of this idol by Moses. Furthermore, the Israelites questioned whether God would lead them safely through the sea; even when He dried up the sea but left it as mud, "Israel began to say, 'He can dry up the sea but not the mud.' God said to them, 'I tested you and you failed. Just as I destroyed the horses and chariot of Pharaoh, so I ought to destroy you. But I will act so that My Great Name is not profaned.'"(Agg. Šir 1)[47] Here again we have the cosmicizing value of God's Name, but the main point is that "when Israel does God's will He fights on their behalf . . . but when they don't do His will He fights against them."(102) Thus the ambivalence which Israel experiences is in some sense derivative of their own ambivalent position: "In the sea they rebelled . . . and in the sea they sang the song [i.e., acknowledged the kingship of God]."(SR 23.10) Insofar as they embrace the true cosmic order they experience cosmos themselves; insofar as they embrace chaos they experience even more chaos. But both the cosmos and the chaos are controlled and meted out by the single God.

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[45] Cf. SR 22.2: "As soon as the last Israelite came out of the sea, the last Egyptian entered the sea."

[46] Cf. Judges 17:4.

[47] There is a common idea in the aggada that if Is-

The idea of God as the judge who controls both cosmos and chaos appears in the following passage: "The sea turned back upon these and upon those. What did God do? His one right hand rescued Israel and His one right hand drowned Egypt."(94) The point here seems to be that the very same divine hand which brings Israel into paradisal cosmos simultaneously dissolves Egypt in the sea. But this passage also symbolizes an interesting fact about the aggada: it pays nearly as much attention to the fate of the Egyptians as to the fate of Israel. All of the various forms of chaos which overcame the Egyptians are enumerated and detailed: "The sea closed in on them from all four sides . . . the Great

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rael is ever fully destroyed, the nations would take this as evidence of God's weakness; i.e., if He cannot save His "chosen people," then He is obviously not omnipotent, and therefore not the true God. This would be a "profanation of the Name," which God will avoid at all costs. Cf. Ezekiel 36 for the Biblical roots of this idea.

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Sea burst into it and fought against them[48] . . . both the lower and upper abyss came up and fought against Egypt . . . all the water in the world returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen."(103) "The lower abyss rose above the upper abyss and blotted out the firmament and darkened the stars for them."(104) "The Scripture tells that if an Egyptian was standing he could not sit down and if he was sitting he could not stand . . . because he was groping in extreme darkness."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 5) Here, in addition to the images of darkness, we have in passage (104) an inversion of the natural order, and in the last passage what might be an image of death, or at least paralysis. Another symbolic form of death as punishment is apparently ascribed to God: "You hardened the water for them like stones and struck them upon the place of their stones."(104a) If one takes "the place of their stones" as a euphemism for testicles, there is an image of the destruction of the life force, the complete act of which circumcision is only a symbol. The death image is given in another manner: "The Egyptians' breath [Heb. nefeš] was tied up inside of them -- it couldn't go in or come out -- and they fainted because of the odor of the sea."(105)

"'And He discomfited [Heb. vay'hom] the camp of Egypt,' -- confused them [Heb. hom'man], and mixed them up [Heb. ʿirb'ban]. He took their battle standards and they didn't know what they were doing."(106) Beyond the general

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[48] The idea here seems to be that the waters of the Mediterranean Sea came into the Reed Sea.

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image of disorder here, there is an importance to the particular choice of words: the Hebrew "*hom'man*" and "*ʿirb'ban*" are etymologically related to "*t'hom*" and "*ʿirbub'yah*," both of which can mean "chaos." The total chaos experienced by the Egyptians is also described graphically: "God shook up the Egyptians like a man shaking a pot, so that those below rose to the top and those at the top fell to the bottom."(Mek. RS 67) Finally, we may note that, "Those who were still in Egypt were stricken with the same suffering as those in the sea, and they each saw the other."(107)[49] Thus all of Egypt experienced chaos at the hands of God. In general, and in many particulars, the Egyptians are said to have experienced the full destructive force of a punishment which Israel experienced only in a symbolic or attenuated form.

Why is it that the aggada is so concerned about the chaos which dissolved the Egyptians? Partly, it would seem for the simple motive of enjoying revenge upon their former masters.[50] But there is more than this: "'And Israel saw Egypt dead [Heb. *met*] upon the shore of the sea' . . . So that Israel would look at them and recognize them . . . . It doesn't actually say, 'And Israel saw Egypt dead [Heb. *metîm*],' but rather, 'Dying [Heb. *met*] on the shore of the

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[49] The idea that the Egyptians all saw each other may serve to underscore the unity of the people as a single national entity; the same idea appears in regard to the Israelites in the sea. Cf. p. 156 below.

[50] In the aggada Egypt is also a symbol of the contemporary political ruler, be it Rome or Constantinople or Baghdad. Thus there is a hope for future revenge expressed here as well.

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sea' -- dying but not yet dead."(108)[51] God wanted the Israelites to watch the Egyptians dying. We noted above the similarities between the experience of the Egyptians and that of the Israelites in the sea. In watching the Egyptians die, the Israelites were seeing the fate which they had escaped only by the narrowest of margins. Samaʾel had come to God and presented the case for destroying Israel -- i.e., their idolatry.

> But God immediately answered him: "World's greatest fool! Do you think they worshipped them willingly? Didn't they worship them only because of their slavery and derangement?"[52] . . . . As soon as the prince of the sea heard this, the wrath with which he had been filled against Israel was turned against Egypt."(109)

"That measure of divine justice which had been extended toward Israel was reversed by God and extended toward Egypt." (110)

In other words, the fate of the Egyptians is not only in some ways similar to that of Israel; the Egyptians in fact receive the very "dose" of punishment which had been intended for Israel and which Israel came so close to receiving. Watching the Egyptians die, the Israelites are watching the execution of the decree originally intended for themselves, and they are seeing the full extent and consequences of the chaos which they had confronted so intensely. The Israelites know that they are liable to the same punishment as the Egyptians because of the common characteristic which both share: those who choose chaos (i.e., idolatry) are subject to being dissolved by God in even greater chaos. Thus the Israelites may see in the Egyptians a symbol of the "chaotic aspect" of their own past lives.[53] Watching the Egyptians die, they are in a sense watching a part of themselves die, too -- the part that must die before they can fulfill their potentiality for a perfect faith relationship with God. In sum, it appears that, for the Israelites, watching the Egyptians die is another form of symbolic death, i.e., an experience of the fullest measure of chaos without actually dying themselves. But in this particular context (if the interpretation offered here is accepted), the significance of symbolic death is made somewhat more clear.

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[51] "Dying but not yet dead" is in Hebrew "*metîm v'loʾ metîm*;" "*metîm*" can mean either "dead" or "dying" in the plural, so that there is no clear-cut English translation. The translation here follows the published ET, which seems to capture the sense of the aggada.

[52] Here the aggada shows its ambivalent attitude toward the Israelites in Egypt. On the one hand, they are said to have been worshippers of idols. But here it is asserted that they did so only because of duress and the insanity resulting from slavery. Once again, the fundamental aggadic "message" only appears by accepting two apparently contradictory viewpoints simultaneously; i.e., the Israelites are both idolatrous and faithful at the same time.

So far, this study of chaos has concentrated on the experiences of human beings, Israelite and Egyptian. And certainly the bulk of the aggada focuses on man's relation

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[53] In a more literal sense the Egyptians would symbolize Israel's past merely because they were the former masters of the Israelites. Furthermore, the Israelites only turned to idolatry when they were mingled with the Egyptians, and thus the destruction of the latter would symbolize the destruction of the force which led Israel to idolatry. In any event, the drowning of Egypt is important to the aggada because it symbolizes a dissolution of the past, the importance of which we have seen in studying Eliade's work as well.

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to God rather than on God in Himself. Yet, mention must be made of the brief number of strictly theological passages, because they are most interesting in this context. We have seen that the aggada explains the principles on which God metes out chaos and cosmos, and that God uses the forces of chaos to control the destinies of both Israelites and Egyptians. But we also noted that God Himself descended to defend the Israelites from the Egyptians, and it is in this context that the aggada, uncharacteristically, becomes almost mythic. Recall in the following passage that Pharoah is the embodiment of Egypt and is identified with the archetypal serpent: "Everything that Pharoah did God did. Pharoah came out wearing weapons and so did God. Pharaoh came out like an heroic warrior and God was like an heroic warrior."(111) "Pharoah came back and took arrows and threw them at Israel and so did God bring arrows of fire and threw them at him." (MT 18.14) Here there is a slight distinction between the earthly weapons of Pharaoh and the heavenly weapons of God; that distinction is clearer in a lengthy list of parallels between God's methods of warfare and Pharaoh's" "His clouds against their troops, His hail against their catapults, His coals against their missiles, His fire against their naptha, etc."(112) But, although the difference between God and Pharaoh is asserted here, the fundamental similarity between the two as warriors remains.

Another parallel is found in the motif of the horses which each rode: "When Pharaoh went out to pursue the Israelites, he said, 'Give me a stallion.' What did God do? He

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made an image of it and rode upon it . . . . Pharaoh went back and said, 'Give me a mare' . . . . [God] said, 'So will I appear to him with a mare.'"(113) But this is a late text, and it may be rooted in an earlier and more interesting motif: "Israel was like mares and the wicked Egyptians like lecherous stallions, and they ran after them until they were drowned in the sea."(114) Here the idea of sexuality rather than war as the means of destroying the Egyptians is introduced, but if we recall Eliade's discussion of the orgy we see that the idea of dissolution in chaos is maintained.[54]

But both of these texts (and other similar texts) seem to go back to a still earlier version: "When Pharaoh came to the sea, he came riding upon a stallion, and God appeared to him with a mare . . . . But wasn't He riding on a cherub? . . . . The cherub appeared as a mare to the stallions of Pharaoh and they all went into the sea."(115) It appears likely that this is the basic aggada[55] from which the other "horse" motifs cited above were derived through censorship and modification. It is not surprising that an aggada which seems to involve God Himself in a sexual -- perhaps even orgiastic -- relationship with Pharaoh would be

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[54] Passage (114) is immediately followed in the text by an objection that it seems to defame Israel, and in fact many texts quote this motif in a modified or censored version, so as not to involve Israel in such sexual imagery. But the real reason for the censorship may be found in the original form of the motif; cf. the following paragraph.

[55] This is the only version of the motif which appears in a Tannaitic text, which makes it probable that this is the earliest version.

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suppressed. But the central concept remains in all of these variants; the force of cosmos, be it God or Israel, is directly involved in chaos in order to overcome chaos. This general conclusion seems to be confirmed in the following: "Four are called mighty [Heb. ʾadîrîm]: God who is mighty appeared to Israel who are called mighty in order to punish Egypt which is called mighty in the sea which is called mighty." (116) All four share some single quality in common in the context of the Exodus narrative. It would not be accurate to identify this quality with chaos. Rather, it seems to stem from the fact that all four participate in the great drama of redemption and cosmogony -- for the dissolution of Egypt by means of the sea is a necessary part of the cosmogonic process -- and each shares in some measure of chaos as part of this drama.

IV

Throughout this chapter several conclusions as to the significance of the aggadic material have been drawn, either explicitly or implicitly. Now those conclusions must be reviewed and amplified, so that the over-all shape of the religious experiences being expressed may come into view. In Part I, several minor themes and four major themes were pointed out which show that a redeemed state, similar to that of the future world, is said to be achieved during the Exodus. While the paradisal garden nourished by rivers of fresh water is chiefly symbolic of the plenitude of life,

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the images of building and construction represent the idea of a perfectly ordered cosmos.[56] But, to repeat, this perfect cosmos is constructed out of the archetypal element of chaos, the waters of the sea, which do not have to be eliminated, although they are transformed.

The fourth principal paradisal symbol, precious stones and metals, are especially interesting because their source is identified: they come from Egypt and the Egyptians. Now, we have seen that Egypt is identified with chaos and specifically with the womb. And, according to Eliade, "Everything that lies in the belly of the earth is alive, albeit in a state of gestation. In other words, the ores extracted from the mines are in some way embryos."(FC, 42) Since "the belly of the earth," like Egypt, is conceived to be a womb, there is a definite parallel between the jewels and metals which come out of Egypt and the embryo which comes out of the womb. Thus it may be concluded that the jewels and riches of the Egyptians are not symbolic of perfect and fully-developed cosmos in this case, but rather of the new creation begun at the time of the Exodus. And the Israelites who carry these precious materials, and who have themselves come out of Egypt, obviously participate in this aspect of new birth as well. In sum, the redeemed state of the Exodus implies a perfection of religious experience, but it coexists with the experience of potentiality; and the primary symbol of this potentiality is the sea which continues to surround the paradisal cosmos.

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[56] The essence of this set of building images, taken as a whole, seems to be that the sea becomes a set of vertical walls, supporting a dome. This is one of the basic models for sanctuaries which are an imago mundi, with the dome representing the sacred mountain or vault of heaven; cf. Eliade, PCR, 375; SP, 62.

However, although the waters of chaos can not be eliminated, they are transformed in several ways, and in general their power is "overcome" by the cosmicizing acts of God. The aggada explicitly extends the meaning of the sea as a symbol by saying that all the waters in the world were split, and it identifies the sea with the primordial waters of creation. Thus the splitting of the sea is a reenactment of the gathering of the waters at the creation (Gen. 1:9). However, here there are many more details given of the nature of this "gathering," and in each case the cosmogonic significance is clear. On a personal level, this new creation is depicted as a rebirth of the Israelites, and thus the chief symbol used is that of the infant and the fetus. The chief meaning here (as with the gems and metals) is that of the new beginning; like the paradisal state, it implies both the plenitude of being in all of its dimensions and the plasticity which gives the potentiality for future growth. This ambivalence is reflected in the fact that little if any differentiation is made between infants -- those already born -- and embryos or fetuses -- those still in the womb. Both together are taken as symbolic of the state of being of Israel as a whole. Thus the message seems to be that they have already experienced a new birth, and yet they are in a state

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of potentiality which has yet to be fulfilled.

It is this possibility for future development which differentiates the paradise of the Exodus from the paradise of the future world. In the latter traces of potentiality exists, because the experience of absolute reality includes in some way the potentiality which precedes it. But potentiality has no effect in terms of creating changes in the future. Here, however, the stasis of a paradisal situation seems to coexist with an experience of potentiality which implies that this is just the beginning of a new creation, a beginning which will be followed by many changes. This point is made in the following passage:

> Just as a woman is pregnant and gives birth and is pregnant and gives birth and once again gives birth and finally is pregnant no more, so Israel is in slavery and is redeemed and is in slavery and is redeemed and once again is redeemed and finally is never in slavery again . . . . In this world, since their suffering is that of a woman in childbirth, they sing a song [Heb. šîrah] before Him in the feminine gender. But in the world to come, since they do not have the suffering of a woman in childbirth, they sing a song [Heb. šîr] in the masculine gender.(117)

The fact that the cosmogony is a new beginning and implies future development explains in part the need for the experience of potentiality. But it is not a total explanation. If it were, the symbolism of the infants, already born, would suffice to express the state of the people. But the aggada insists on the symbolism of the embryos alongside that of the infants. And the symbolism of total immersion and initiatory death makes it clear that the regression to a prebirth state is intended. Moreover, although chaos is "overcome," it is not entirely incorporated into the newly-formed

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cosmos; to a large extent it maintains its own separate existence, standing over against Israel and being fully experienced by them. Thus the significance of this experience of chaos and its relationship to redemption in the aggada must be clarified.

Throughout this chapter we have seen that the Israelites share in both chaos and redemption. Thus the status of the people themselves is instructive for understanding the general relationship between these two categories. The Israelites begin their journey in the "womb," the chaotic state, of Egypt, and in many ways it is implied that they share directly in this chaos. Yet at the same time they are obviously held to be in some sense different from the Egyptians. In the aggada, this difference is expressed most clearly in terms of the idolatry/faith polarity, which is one way that the aggada translates the chaos/cosmos polarity. While the Egyptians are the archetypes of idolatry, the Israelites apparently had some minimum of faith which set them apart; God says: "The faith which Israel had in Me in Egypt was sufficient; I will split the sea for them."(118) But at the same time Israel is said to share directly in the idolatry of Egypt, so that another aggada claims: "As soon as He divided the sea for them, they believed in Him."(119) That is, they believed in Him only after the division, not before. The best understanding of the aggada's view here is gained by taking both statements simultaneously; i.e., there is a radical ambivalence in the status of Israel, for

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they are both faithful and yet idolatrous at the same time throughout the Exodus narratives.[57]

Against this background, the various events of the Exodus aggadot all appear to have a similar meaning. In each case, the Israelites must face chaos and the imminent threat of death, and in each case they just barely escape total dissolution. Now, we have seen several times the aggadic principle that chaos draws chaos to itself, implying that the Israelites brought these experiences upon themselves insofar as they were idolatrous and lacking in faith. But we have also seen that this principle is not the working of an impersonal cosmic mechanism; rather, it is a rule applied by the active and personal will of God. Thus we may ask why God chooses to apply this principle in the redemptive history of His "chosen" people. Here again the fate of the Egyptians as a model is instructive. It teaches that the rule of chaos bringing chaos has a particular purpose -- it enables God to eliminate human chaos by dissolving it in natural chaos. When this redemptive process is complete, the whole world is, as it were, divided between God -- cosmos -- and the sea -- chaos. Those who choose to deny God must be dissolved in and reduced to the sea. In the case of the Egyptians, who represent complete chaos, there is no reason to limit the process of dissolution, and thus they are all drowned.

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[57] The same point was made in n. 52 above. Cf. also Ginzberg, Legends, II, 362-363; he cites one passage which claims that God ignored the idolatry of Israel when He decided to redeem them, while the very next paragraph says that He would not redeem them until they voluntarily renounced their idols.

But the Israelites, because of their ambivalent status, demand an ambivalent treatment at the hands of God. In so far as they are idolatrous, that idolatry must be eliminated if they are to be the agents and bearers of a new cosmic creation. But insofar as they have some measure of faith, that faith must be preserved. Thus their encounter with chaos must be limited, and in fact this is what happens. In each case their experience of chaos is so intense and overwhelming that it constitutes a symbolic death. Nothing remains of their former selves and former lives -- except for the measure of faith in God which they maintain. This is the meaning of every initiatory experience through which they must pass. As Eliade expresses it, the process of new creation demands an elimination of the effects of past history -- the first of his three functions of chaos. In this case past history means the absorption of Israel into the idolatry of Egypt. Thus what must be dissolved is that aspect of Israel which makes it like all the other nations, while the only thing preserved in the encounter with chaos is a state of faith which renders them in some way "more than human." This appears most clearly in the Symplegades-type "four-sided chaos," the escape from which is symbolized by the transcendent flight of the bird. There must be an increasing intensification of chaos, so that all of the measure of chaos within the people can be dissolved, leaving nothing but pure faith.

At the same time, this experience renders them like

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embryos and new-born infants, not "more than human" but rather,"incipiently human." However, the "new man" who is being born here is in a sense "more than human," or at least more truly human than other men, since he is in closer and truer contact with God. The process of redemption points not only to what is left behind, but also to what is to come. Thus an increasing degree of potentiality is necessary, potentiality for the creation of an intense and permanent faith relationship in the future. In the Exodus narratives the faith relationship is somewhat tenuous and threatened by chaos. The aggada asks:

> And what caused them to be saved? From their right and from their left. From their right by the merit of the Torah . . . and from their left, this is prayer. Another interpretation: From their right this is the *m'zuzah*, and from their left, these are the *t'filîn* [i.e., phylacteries]."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 7)

Much interpretation could be given to this passage, but the chief significance seems to be that the factors which save them are all symbols of Israel's particular faith relationship with God. However, each is an institutionalized aspect of that relationship which has not yet, at the time of the Exodus, been instituted. Thus the saving factor is held to be something which will exist in the future and bind Israel to God. This point is made explicitly in another version of the passage just cited: "By merit of the Torah which they were destined to receive in the future from the right hand of God."(Šir R. I,9,4) In other words, we may say that in Egypt their faith was for the most part a potentiality for faith, and after having crossed the sea their faith had just

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begun to increase in actuality, while there was a tremendously increased potential for faith. Hence the need for both the infant and embryo images, and the close connection between the two. Here we see the second function of chaos described by Eliade -- it provides the potentiality for new creation.

In sum, the process by which God carries out cosmicization through the people of Israel is one of increasing their potentiality for faith, while maintaining the minimum of faith which they already had. And it seems that the greater the chaos, the greater the opportunity for that faith to manifest itself. Thus God must cooperate with chaos, the force which increases potentiality, in order to actualize the new religious age. And there is even the suggestion that God Himself shares in this increased force of potentiality, in order to bring Israel through it safely. The Israelites are said to experience God both in the experience of chaos and in the perfected religious experience of the redeemed state in the midst of the sea. But the most characteristic experience of God in the Exodus aggadot appears to be the experience of a new beginning, the tremendous potential for faith which has just begun to be actualized. Thus both the experience of absolute reality as understood by Eliade and the experience of at least the first two of his functions of chaos are understood by the aggada to be aspects of the experience of God. And these various aspects are not depicted sequentially in the aggada; i.e., we do not find first the elimination of the former state of existence, then the infusion of potentiality for new creation, and finally the attainment of a new cosmos. Rather, all of these experiences appear simultaneously and concurrently, re-emphasizing the conclusion that they all contribute to the single experience of the single God and His acts.

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CHAPTER IV

THE WANDERING IN THE DESERT

Following the crossing of the sea, the Israelites began their wandering in the desert. Here, as we shall see, the potentiality for paradisal cosmos is increasingly actualized, so that the emphasis in the desert aggadot is on the perfection of cosmic order. And once again this order appears as the result of a new cosmogony effected by the Creator. Thus, there is increasing stress in this chapter on absolute reality as manifest in a new and perfect cosmos. Yet at the same time we shall see the two functions of chaos described in the last chapter reaffirmed as acts of God in the process of redemption, and we shall see continued traces of chaos in the perfected cosmos as well. Furthermore, the third function of chaos described by Eliade -- its role as a means to the experience of _coincidentia_ _oppositorum_ -- will also become readily apparent in this chapter. The present chapter, therefore, widens our understanding both of the redeemed state and the role of chaos in obtaining it and ultimately widens our understanding of the relationship of redemption and chaos in the aggada.

I

In the previous chapter one passage claimed that the sea was like the desert because Israel lacked for nothing while in it. In the present context this idea is elaborated:

"They needed only to mention something and it was created before them . . . . They did not even need words, for if someone thought of something in his mind, it was created immediately."(1) Like the sea, this paradise is one in which man has everything that he needs or wants in infinite measure. But in this case the creativity of the situation is emphasized; i.e., new things can constantly be created in this time of new beginnings. Here we see the conjunction (which Eliade finds to be characteristic of the paradisal state), of the plenitude of being and the "plasticity" which allows for constant change and development. Furthermore, whatever is created in this paradise arises from the thoughts of the Israelites; thus the people participate directly in this creative process. A similar idea is expressed in the statement that "as soon as they came out [of Egypt] they became a garden of pomegranates."(2) "He planted all kinds of spices in it . . . He planted apples in it."(SR 20.5) "They became like a vine of wine grapes."(3) All of these passages are variations on a familiar theme -- direct participation in the abundant life of paradise.[1]

As in the sea, this paradisal garden is watered by miraculous water: the Israelites camped at ʾElîm, and

> that place was more lacking in water than any other place, for behold there were twelve springs there and they only sufficed for seventy palms. But when Israel came, 600,000 people camped there and the water sufficed for them, and they studied[2] and they repeated and repeated

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[1] Cf. Chapter II, Section 1 above on the significance of "direct participation" and on this theme in general.

[2] "Studied" [Heb. lanu] means literally "they lodged,

again.(4)

The main point here is the saving quality of the water, but that idea is tied directly to the belief that at ʾElim the Israelites first began to study God's laws. There is definite connection between having the water and being able to study the Torah, which is the source of man's knowledge of the cosmic order: "'And they camped there by the water' -- This teaches that they were sitting and concerning themselves with the Torah."(5) Another miraculous source of water was the rock which Moses struck with his staff: "As soon as the water came out it watered all the tents of Israel;" the editor adds the explanation: "And they didn't need to go to the rock to get its water."(6) Like food, water is obtained effortlessly.

This motif of water coming from rock is also found in the paradise of the sea, and, in a somewhat different form, in the paradise of the future world. In the latter case the rivers which water the land come from the Temple, and more specifically from the Holy of Holies, which has at its center the "foundation stone" which holds back the waters of the abyss. As shown above, it is probable that the Temple was held to have a cosmicizing effect, transforming the chaos of the abyss into life-giving water in the form of rivers; this effect may have been ascribed particularly to the foun-

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spent the night;" the meaning here is idiomatic -- cf. Alcalay, *Dictionary*, p. 1111: *lan b'ʾahalah šel torah*, which means "to devote all one's time to study," or literally, "to lodge in the tent of learning."

ation stone.[3] Thus the motif of water coming from the rock in the present context, clearly a paradisal context as well, may easily have been seen as a direct parallel and allusion to the eschatological motif, and its basic meaning as a symbol of cosmicization would be the same. In general, the water of the oasis, whatever its source, is certainly symbolic of paradisal cosmos.

One of the principal features of the aggadot concerning the desert travel is their emphasis on geometrical order. The aggada takes the idea of clouds of glory surrounding the Israelites and asks how many clouds there actually were. Several answers are given: "Four -- one in front of them, one behind them, one above and one below."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 1) "Five -- four in the four directions and one above and one below and one in front of them [i.e., to lead them]." (Sifre N. 83) "There were thirteen clouds -- two in each direction, two above, two below, and one which went in front of them."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 1) Each of these passages appears in a Tannaitic text, so the variations cannot be explained by any historical development.[4] And, although significance might be found in the differences between them, I think that the most important idea is common to all. The first passage shows a simple quaternity, and each one following it is mere-

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[3] Cf. Chapter III, n.3 above.

[4] Of course, the various traditions cited here may have developed at different times before the compilation of the Tannaitic texts. But at the outset of the period being treated here -- the period of written aggadic texts -- all of these traditions were current.

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ly a variation on this basic pattern. In each case the Israelites are surrounded by an ordered cosmic construction of divine clouds, and the people themselves are at the center.

This motif is repeated in describing the Israelite camp; the center upon which the clouds focus has an order, too. "What is the meaning of 'the desert of Šur?' That Israel desired to be formed row [Heb. šur] upon row, flag upon flag."(7)[5] The image here is apparently one of a military camp, but it is given a wider significance: "Camp upon camp, flag upon flag, row upon row, the way a vineyard is planted."(8) "They became like a vine of wine grapes . . . they were formed row upon row."(9) Here the symbolism of cosmic order is combined with the wine as a symbol of abundant life in the redeemed world. This conjunction of order and life-force also occurs in the description of the oasis at ʾElim: "He created there twelve springs for the twelve tribes and seventy palms for the seventy elders."(10) Thus the oasis itself has exactly the same order as the people of Israel, and the former suffices to nourish the latter.

The physical encampment of the people is also described on the model of a quaternity which is related to the life-force: "Just as this nut is made of four compartments and is empty in the middle, so Israel was encamped in the desert -- four flags, four camps, and the Tent of Meeting in the middle."(Šir R. VI,11,1)[6] Finally, the camp is depicted as a cosmic space which must be rigidly separated from the chaos surrounding it: "Around the dwelling two cubits were taken from the earth."(11) This seems to depict a ditch separating the camp from the desert (and we shall see the same idea depicted in a different manner in a later chapter).

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[5] Recall that the removal of battle flags was one of the symbols of chaos overtaking the Egyptians; cf. Chapter III, p. 154 above.

The idea of cosmic order being centered on the Israelites is continued in the aggadic belief that in the desert they lived like monarchs: God says to Israel, "I caused you to lie down on couches," to which the aggada adds the comment, "He caused them to lie down the way kings lie down on their couches."(12) "'And God led the people around by way of the desert' -- What is the meaning of 'led around' [Heb. *vayeseb*]? It teaches that He caused them to lie down the way that kings recline[7] and lie down on their couches." (13) The emphasis on the Hebrew *m'subîn* adds the image of a royal banquet here, since the word is used especially to denote reclining at banquets,[8] and thus it is a parallel to the banquet of the righteous in the future world.

"From where did they get the clothing for all the forty years? From that with which the ministering angels clothed them, as it is said, 'And I will dress you in embroi-

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[6] According to Ginzberg, *Legends* V, pp. 97-98, there is a parallel between the nut and the grape in aggadic sources -- both are held to be the "forbidden fruit" of the Garden of Eden.

[7] "Recline" [Heb. *m'subîn*] is a verbal play on *vayeseb*, which is derived from the same root.

[8] Cf. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, p. 948.

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dery [Heb. riqmah].' What is embroidery? Royal purple [Heb. porfîrah]."(MT 23.4) This clothing which the angels gave them had a miraculous quality: "That which they wore did not wear out but that which they had in cases did wear out." (14) Thus the clothing which the angels provided was of a different nature from that which the people took out of Egypt, and what marked it especially was that it was free from the wearing effects of time. Perhaps this is meant to signify an ahistorical and atemporal state, like the paradise of the future world. In any case, heavenly clothing bestowed by angels seems to be symbolic of an elevated spiritual state.[9]

In the desert aggadot several motifs prominent in the aggadot concerning the future redemption are introduced briefly, but when taken as a whole they indicate clearly that the former redemption is meant to mirror the latter. Since their clothes were free from the effects of time, the people never had any reason to change them. "Didn't they smell from the odor of sweat since they never changed their clothes? . . . . The well raised all kinds of grasses and all kinds of spices and they rolled in them . . . and the odor wafted from one end of the world to the other."(15) God says to Israel: "Didn't I Myself give you light? As it is said, 'And God walks before them in the day."(16)[10] "Even in their travelling at night they did not lack light."(Mek.

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[9] Cf. Chapter V, Part IV on the concept of spiritualization.

[10] "In the day" [Heb. yomam] means literally "their day"; in other words, God Himself is the source of daylight

RS 47) In relating the story of Moses striking the rock with his staff, the cosmicizing value of which has been noted, the aggada says: "This staff is made of sapphire."(Mek. RS 118) In a previous chapter we saw that the firmament above the Garden of Eden is also made of sapphire, and the significance of the firmament as a symbol of cosmic order has also been noted. Thus the symbolism of sapphire in connection with both staff and firmament seems to carry the same meaning.

Another motif mentioned is that of canopies: "'And they travelled from Sukkot' -- Sukkot can only mean the clouds of glory, . . . and thus it will be in the future: 'And there will be a canopy [Heb. sukkah, singular of sukkot] for shade from the heat in the daytime."(17) There is an interesting variation on a motif found in the Exodus narrative:[11] "They became a garden of pomegranates . . . . Living water was found in it . . . He built a tower in it . . . He placed a guardian in it, as it is said, 'God is your guardian.'"(18) The image here is a sort of model of the land of Israel in the future world: a paradisal garden whose tranquillity is guaranteed by a high building which is God's residence and which connects heaven and earth. It is possible that this, and perhaps the fortress built in the sea while Israel crossed it as well, is a conscious allusion to the future Jerusalem. In any event, it emphasizes the sacredness of the center and the peaceful state of man.

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for the people, yomam being interpreted as an adjective modifying "God."

[11] Cf. Chapter III, p.119 above; as well as Chapter III, passage (4).

The importance of the center is even further stressed by the fact that the cloud going before the people "would crush the rocks before them. And if it was a low place it would raise it, and if it was a high place it would lower it, and it made a plain."(19) Thus, except for the sacred high place, the land, as in the future, is a flat plain. Finally, the aggada also emphasizes the tranquillity and safety of the people: "The snakes and scorpions would lie down before them so that Israel would not be frightened by them."(SR 24.4) In this set of aggadot the snakes and scorpions, as we shall see, play the same role as the wild beasts which are said to be tamed or banished in the future world.

II

In the passage just cited the force of chaos, symbolized by the snakes and scorpions, is transformed and incorporated into the newly created cosmos. However, as we saw in the preceding chapter, the creation of a new cosmos may also entail a violent destruction of chaos. Like the serpent of the sea, the evils of the desert are also said to be destroyed by the cosmicizing force of God. This task is usually assigned to the cloud which went in front of the Israelites: "One would go before them at a distance of three days' journey and smite the snakes and scorpions and poisonous serpents before them." (20) This cloud would also level the ground, as noted above, and furthermore, it would "burn the thistles and thorny plants." (21) The significance of this motif is made clearer by a variant on it, set in the period after the revelation at Sinai: "When Israel was in the desert . . . two sparks of fire would come out from between the two poles of the Ark and would burn the snakes and scorpions before them."(22) The Ark, which was destined to repose at the center of the cosmos in the Holy of Holies, contained the essence of the cosmic law. Thus it had the power to destroy the physical manifestations of chaos which surrounded the Israelites.

But the viewpoint cited above, that the evil animals are pacified and incorporated into the cosmos (rather than being destroyed), also has further support: the cloud of glory would "smite the snakes and scorpions, which would pay homage and lie down before them [i.e., before Israel]."(23) Here the use of the verb "smite" indicates that there is a sort of compromise between two views: violence is necessary to overcome chaos, but it results in the transformation, not the elimination, of chaos. Another opinion, though, indicates that violence is not needed because chaos is under the command of God and must follow His instructions: "God, out of the great love with which He loved Israel, would command the snakes, who made themselves a sort of bridge, and Israel would pass over them like a man who passes over a bridge."(24) Passing over a bridge, like passing through a gate, is a symbol of the passage to a new spiritual state through an initiatory ritual.(Eliade, SP, 181) Therefore, in itself the bridge image is important in establishing the wandering through the desert as a cosmicizing journey, a passage from chaos to a new cosmos. A variation on this idea is the belief that the cloud in front of them "makes for them a straight and flat path."(25)[12] But the fact that the bridge is made up of snakes, the archetype of chaos in the desert, indicates that chaos cooperates directly in the passage to the new cosmos, because it is commanded to do so by God. In sum, the viewpoint of the aggada as a whole is ambivalent. The road travelled by the Israelites leads through chaos, and in fact it is created by the cloud as it destroys chaos. Yet at the same time, chaos is said to be pacified and incorporated into the new cosmos and/or the process of cosmicization. The one unanimous conclusion is that the power of chaos to harm the Israelites is negated.

The escape from the dangers of the desert is also depicted as an initiatory sort of transformation on the personal level. The situation of the Israelites is described in

> a parable of one who was walking on the road and was leading his son in front of him . . . . Robbers came in front of him and a wolf behind him; he took him [i.e., the son] and put him on his shoulders, as it is said, "In the desert where you saw that the Lord your God carried you as a man would carry his son." (Mek. Baḥodeš 2)

This situation is a parallel to that of the Israelites surrounded by chaos before crossing the sea; i.e., a situation apparently impossible of escape. The same predicament is described in conjunction with a different Biblical verse: "I carried you upon the clouds of glory."(SR 26.2) This verse in turn leads to the aggadic belief that "the Šekînah would carry them, borne upon clouds of glory and surrounded by them."(26) This recalls the symbolism of the dove used in the Exodus aggadot, and here as there the idea seems to be that the transforming religious experience involves a sort of magical flight or ascension as the solution to an apparently hopeless predicament in the face of chaos. In the present context, this ascension is also an immediate experience of God in itself, since it is depicted in the image of riding upon God's shoulders or upon His clouds. And thus it is an attainment of a new religious state.[13]

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[12] Cf. Chapter III, Part II above on the symbolism of paths and roads.

As in the passage through the sea, this attainment is also conceived as a purification: "The desert in order to purify them . . . the Reed Sea in order to test them." (Mek. B'šalaḥ 1) Another image used is that of healing: "'All the illness which I laid upon Egypt I will not lay upon you' -- That is, if you don't obey I will lay it upon you, but if you repent, 'For I, God, am your healer.'"(27) This healing must be understood in light of the eschatological belief that all Israel would be completely healed in the future world. But it also expresses quite clearly the ambivalence of Israel; their healing -- their redemption -- is integrally related to their adopting cosmos rather than chaos. And although God overcomes chaos on their behalf, Israel is a necessary part in this process, and they are left with the freedom to choose either God or chaos.

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[13] In Eliade's view, ascension in this sort of context symbolizes "an ontological mutation" achieved "by an excess of 'spiritualization'"(MDM, 105, 107); cf. Chapter V, Part IV below.

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III

Although God was always with them, the aggada leaves no doubt that in the desert the Israelites were constantly surrounded by chaos as well. The Bible calls this desert "the desert of Šur," but the aggada is unanimous in identifying it with the "desert of Kub. They said about this desert of Kub that it is 800 parasangs by 800 parasangs, and all of it filled with snakes and poisonous serpents and scorpions." (SR 24.4) "There were snakes as big as the beam of an oil-press and scorpions the size of a man's little finger in it." (28) The significance of the fauna as symbols of chaos has already been pointed out; this last passage merely stresses the point. The dimensions of the desert are interesting because it is said to form a perfect square and because in all of the aggadic texts exactly the same dimensions are given.[14] The point here seems to be that this desert is a limited area -- unlike the sea, for example -- and is an area specifically set aside by God for the Israelites to pass through and experience chaos in. Like the descriptions of Gehinom referred to in an earlier chapter, the place of chaos here has something of a cosmic, quaternary structure.

Another tradition says, "The desert of Šur is the desert of Kazab."(29)[15] Now the Hebrew word kazab means

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[14] This is exceptional, since the passage of time and difference of traditions usually yields different numbers, even when the idea is the same. Thus this must be a fairly early and deep-rooted tradition.

[15] The same aggada appears in a variant mss. of Mek. Vayosa 2, cited by the editor of the printed text.

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"lie," and it is written virtually identically to the word kub, which means "thorn." The significance of the latter meaning is fairly straightforward; we have seen that one of the acts of cosmicization in this context is the burning of the thorns. But the significance of kazab is probably more than a scribal error. If in fact chaos is related directly to the rejection of the true cosmic order and the acceptance of an idolatrous counterfeit, then calling the desert "lie" confirms its significance as a place of chaos.

The chaos of the desert is also identified with death: "'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death' -- in the highest part[16] of the desert."(30) If the translation offered here is correct, then there is a sort of parody on the cosmos; in a cosmos the highest part is the source of life. Another text asks: "What is the valley of the shadow of death? A place where there is shade and with it death."(31) This too is perhaps a parody, or at least comparison, with the Garden of Eden, in which shade is provided for all and is a source of life. But this last passage may refer specifically to another aggadic motif, the mythical animal ʾefʿeh which inhabits this desert: "The ʾefʿeh is the viper. They said about this viper that if it merely sees the shadow of a bird flying in the air, immediately the bird starts spinning and its limbs drop off one by one."(32) Whether or not this is the shadow of death referred too, it certainly increases the mystery and terror of these descriptions of the desert. Finally, we have the simple but very expressive statement: "This desert is chaos [Heb. tohu] in which there is nothing."(Mek. Vayošaʿ 2)

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[16] "Highest part" is in Hebrew kadkod; the published ET renders it "parched scalp." Literally, the word refers to the top part of the head. Cf. Jastrow, Dictionary, p. 1317, especially on BR 62 end.

The significance of passing through the desert may very well be expressed in the following: "Four must give praise, and these are the ones: those who travel in the deserts, and one who was in prison and was released, and one who was sick and recovered, and those who go down to the sea." (MT 107.5) It seems that these four types of experiences are held to be in some way parallel to each other, and the common feature among them would be facing mortal danger and escaping. That is what men are bidden to give praise for. Thus travelling through the desert (and emerging unharmed, one assumes) is an experience of chaos in an initiatory manner. The structure of the passage shows a particular parallel between the desert and sea experiences,[17] a parallel which has appeared in other passages as well.

The threatening dimensions of the desert experience are multiplied in the aggada, and foremost among them is the danger of death from thirst or starvation. Elaborating on the Biblical verse, "And they went three days in the desert

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[17] The clauses pertaining to desert and sea denote a continuing occupation ("those who"), while the clauses pertaining to prison and sickness denote a singular event ("one who was"). The editor of the printed edition of MT cites a mss. which links this aggada with Psalms 107:18: "And they arrived at the gates of death."

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and did not find water," the aggada adds: "Even in their water-jugs they did not find it."(33) Thus the possibility of death by thirst is quite real. "But wasn't the water right under the feet of Israel? What does the earth float on if not water? . . . . 'And they found no water' -- This was only in order to tire them out."(34) A variant of the same tradition says, "in order to test them."(Mek. RS 102) Although it is not stated explicitly, it is obvious that God is the One who is either tiring out or testing the people,[18] and thus God prevents them from getting water. An allegorical interpretation of this tradition is also given: "'Water' can only mean Torah. As soon as they went for three days without Torah they were exhausted."(TB B.K. 82a) But the basic meaning is the same: Torah, like the water of the oasis, is symbolic of cosmos and life, and without it the people come face to face with the chaos of death.

These descriptions of thirst are based on the Biblical passages referring to the Israelites' stay at Marah. But in describing a later stop at R'pîdîm, where the Bible says they also suffered thirst, the aggada says: "Up till now they had not suffered thirst, but here they suffered thirst."(35) The point is that the later thirst is much more severe than the earlier; thus the danger of death in which God had put them is intensified as their journey progresses. However, this threat is not the most serious, because there is also

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[18] Tiring out and testing seem to be two variations on the same basic idea -- an initiatory ordeal conceived as a form of purification; cf. Mek. B'šalaḥ 1 cited above on p. 181 above.

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the threat of starvation, and "you will not find a death worse than starvation."(36) The significance of starvation is seen in two sets of parallels: one describes the desert as "full of snakes and scorpions and poisonous serpents and starvation"(SR 24.4), and the other has the Israelites say, "There came upon us starvation after starvation, plague after plague, darkness after darkness."(Mek. RS 106) Thus hunger is seen as one of a series of forms of chaos which the Israelites had to face, and hunger, like thirst, was experienced a number of times. We may assume that in this case, too, the Israelites must endure the threat of death because God wills it,[19] and in fact, the aggada points out that "from Egypt to the land of Israel is eleven days' journey, but God took them by way of the desert for forty years."(37) The experience of chaos (tiring out and testing) is once again made to play a role in the process of redemption.

The ambivalent role of chaos is expressed in a number of other motifs set in the desert narratives. When the Israelites came to Marah and found the water there bitter, God told Moses to throw a tree into the water to sweeten it. One tradition holds that "This was an olive tree and you won't find anything more bitter than olives."(Mek. RS 103) Whatever the kind of tree, the aggada is unanimous that, "God heals with the very same thing with which He smites . . . . Go and learn from Marah, for He showed Moses a bitter thing, and he threw it into the [bitter] water and the water was sweetened."(38) The significance of the bitter waters is disputed: "They were only bitter for that short time and then they were sweetened."(39) "They had always been bitter from the beginning."(40) The latter viewpoint seems to hold that these are akin to the primeval waters of chaos, and thus the sweetening is an act of cosmicization. If so, the principle given in passage (38) is that God uses chaos in order to overcome ("heal") the power of chaos, a principle which we have seen illustrated before. In passage (39) the implication is that God had made the waters bitter just when Israel arrived there. In a sense God creates chaos for His own purposes, according to this view, and then uses chaos to overcome that chaos. Here too there is a cosmicizing act following the same principle seen in passage (38). Thus the differences between these two aggadot seem to be less important than their basic agreement on the relationship between God and chaos in the process of redemption.

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[19] God's subsequent gift of manna makes it clear that He could have rescued the people from threatened starvation at any time. Thus, if they suffered any hunger it was by the consent of God.

Apparently the Israelites were well aware of God's propensity to use chaos in overcoming chaos. When God told Moses to strike the rock with his staff to get water, the people said:

> "This staff is a staff of punishment. It made the waters [of the Nile] foul in Egypt and it brought the ten plagues on Egypt." God said to them, "With that with which I smite I also heal." Therefore, it is said, "And take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile" -- so that all would know that it is a staff of blessing.(41)

In the case of the bitter tree, one form of chaos was used to eliminate a similar form of chaos and create a manifestation of cosmos (i.e., sweet water). In the case of the staff, a symbol of cosmos is seen to produce either chaos or cosmos, depending on the circumstances, although the ultimate result is always cosmicization. But the element common to both is that God does produce manifestations of chaos in order to advance His own ends -- i.e., cosmicization -- and sometimes these manifestations are specifically aimed at Israel.[20]

It would seem that God led the Israelites around for forty years precisely in order to have them experience the many forms of chaos and cosmicization which occur in the desert. A variant on this idea is found in the following passage:

> As soon as the Canaanites heard that Israel would enter the land, they got up and burned the crops and cut down the trees and pulled down the buildings and stopped up the springs. God said, "I didn't promise Abraham their father that I would bring them into a land laid waste, but into a land full of everything good. But behold I will lead them around in the desert for forty years so that the Canaanites will arise and repair all that they have destroyed."(Mek. B'šalaḥ 1)

And in fact this is precisely what the Canaanites did: "As soon as they heard that they [i.e., Israel] would be detained in the desert forty years . . . they arose and planted crops and raised them."(SR 20.16) The point of this tradition seems to be that the land of Israel, like the people, had to go through a sort of initiatory death and rebirth before the new era of sacred history, with Israel dwelling on its own land, could begin. The land becomes a "waste land" (Heb.

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[20] Recall that many Israelites died in the plagues in Egypt, too, which may explain in part the Israelites' fear of the staff.

ḥarebah), like the sea and the desert through which the people pass, and then experiences a rebirth of life. And this process of death and new birth is explicitly said to be the reason why God kept Israel in the desert forty years.

Thus far, the desert has appeared as a predominantly negative symbol of chaos and death. But the aggada also finds another side to the meaning of the desert, and in this respect it is differentiated from the sea: "When God came to the sea, it fled before Him . . . . He came to the desert of Ḥoreb,[21] it greeted Him and praised Him . . . . He said, 'This is the city that is better than all the states; in it I build a lodging and dwell therein.'"(42) Thus God has a special relationship with the desert which He does not have with His archetypal enemy, the sea. One possible explanation for this relationship is given in the following: "The desert said, 'I am the desert and I am beloved because all the good things in the world are hidden within me . . . . God gave them to me so that they might be guarded within me, and when God shall request them from me, I shall return His deposit to Him undamaged."(43) The English translator of this text adds an interesting note: "The idea may be that the wilderness was endowed with potential fertility which in the fullness of time will be realized." If his interpretation is substantially correct, then the desert appears to be in fact a chaos, but a chaos created purposely by God; one which

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[21] "Ḥoreb" means literally "aridity" or "desolation"; cf. *ḥarebah* from the same root.

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obeys His commands and is destined to be transformed at some time of new creation. Whatever the precise meaning, it does seem to be clear that this particular manifestation of chaos cooperates with God and submits to the control of God.

But the positive evaluation of the desert appears most strongly in the parallel drawn by the aggada between the desert and the righteous of Israel: "Why was it [i.e., the Torah] revealed in the desert? . . . . Who upholds the Torah? He who makes himself like a desert and separates himself from everything."(44) "If a man does not practice self-renunciation like the desert, he is not able to practice Torah."(45) "This desert is empty of all pleasures . . . . The Torah is only upheld by those who make themselves like the desert." (46) It is the emptiness of the desert which makes it a suitable model for those who hope to obey God's Law. The desert is empty of pleasures; the implication of this is found in another aggada. In a passage where the earlier texts read, "There is nothing at all in the desert," a modern critical edition reads, "There is no sin and no iniquity in the desert, just as there is no sin and no iniquity in the ancient Fathers."(47) In other words, to be like the desert means to be empty of the sinfulness which might hinder obedience to God. The emptiness of the desert, then, is a model for the potentiality -- the ability and the readiness -- to practice Torah. To be like the desert is to be like the embryo, unformed and therefore able to take on the form of life which God commands. In this sense potentiality has a positive rather than a negative value.[22]

The positive evaluation of the desert is also found in two other passages which should be studied. The first says simply, "Just as the desert has no end, so the Torah has no end."(48) Here once again we have the ambivalence of infinitude; it can apply to the formlessness and consequent limitlessness of chaos, and it can apply equally to the perfection of cosmos. But God is also infinite, and perhaps this is the central point of the following: "'The Lord your God . . . Who leads you in the desert, the great and awesome' -- We don't know whom it calls 'great,' God or the desert. But Moses said to them, 'Great and awesome is God.'"(49) The dilemma here is quickly resolved, but the fact that it could arise at all indicates a very positive evaluation of the desert. The aggada does not say that this evaluation is based on the feature of infinitude common to both, although the terms "great" and "awesome" may lead to that conclusion. But there is obviously some affinity between God and the desert,[23] and in general the experience of the desert is said to be a model for religious experience because of its infinitude and the absence of anything mundane or sinful in it. Although these characteristics are certainly not the full content of the religious experience, they are an integral part of it, and thus the experience of the desert and the religious experience are not contradictory. Yet the experience of the desert also implies all of the negative features which we surveyed above. Here again we see an ambivalence of the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* type.[24] The positive and negative aspects of the desert are two aspects of a single experience.

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[22] This is the same basic idea which was expressed in the infant/embryo symbolism in the preceding chapter.

[23] Passage (49) is somewhat similar to the passage beginning "Four are called mighty" at the end of Chapter III, Part III above. Both passages point out a quality which God and chaos share -- a quality of sheer magnitude which is neutral in value terms.

Like the desert through which they are travelling, the people themselves are depicted as ambivalent. On the one hand, the aggada affirms that their own chaotic state once again brought chaos upon them. As soon as they finished singing the song, in which they avowed their faith in God, they had a change of heart: "They said, 'There is no one left alive in Egypt. Let us return to Egypt and worship idols' . . . . They would not move in compliance with God's command, but Moses forced them to move with his staff."(SR 24.2) One text claims that, although they did journey on, even in the desert "there was an idol in their hands."(Tan. B IV, 79) Their lack of faith also appeared at Marah, when they found the water bitter: "Israel should have allowed themselves to be ruled by the greatest among them and merely

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[24] Rudolph Otto uses the term "*numinous*" to denote the object of this ambivalent experience. The word "awesome" used in passage (49) to describe God and the desert is the Hebrew *nora'*, which is probably the closest Hebrew equivalent for Otto's "*numinous*." Cf. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, p. 593. Otto himself identifies the word "awe" as the closest English equivalent to his word "*numinous*"; cf. Rudolph Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. John W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 14.

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asked, 'What shall we drink?' But they arose and uttered complaining words against Moses . . . . And not only against Moses, but even against God."(Mek. RS 103) Finally, the social structure of the Israelites is also depicted as chaotic. One of the specific marks of the future redemption is that all Jews will return to the land of Israel and will unite and live peacefully as a single group; as we shall see, the same unity is manifest at Sinai. But here, "In all their travels it is written, 'And they travelled . . . and they camped'[25] -- travelling in discord and camping in discord."(50)

Nevertheless, despite these manifestations of chaos, the Israelites are also said to be in some way spiritually elevated, because we find that they are akin to Eliade's "masters of fire." "Were they not burned by the cloud which is made of fire? Don't be surprised by this; just as asbestos can only be washed by fire, so their clothes, which were heavenly products, were washed by the cloud and they weren't hurt."(51) "The nations of the world would see them and say: 'These people are divine[26]-- in all of their activities they handle fire.'"(52) To repeat a point made earlier, fire is a highly ambivalent symbol; it is at once an agent of destruction and of regeneration, and therefore it is often a prime means of purification. It is very possible that the image of washing clothes in fire here is symbolic of purification and regeneration. Certainly the last passage cited makes it clear that the Israelites were raised to a higher spiritual level, and the handling of fire is explicitly said to be evidence of this ("These people are divine"). Thus we may conclude that the multiple experiences of chaos which Israel faced and survived in the desert did serve as an initiatory experience, raising them to a new spiritual level.[27]

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[25] The point here is that the verbs "travelled" and "camped" are in the plural, denoting to the aggadists a lack of unity among the people.

[26] "Divine" (in Hebrew, *ʾelohut*) means literally "divinity" in the edited text. However, the Hebrew *ʾelohot* ("gods") is written identically in an unvocalized text and might be a preferable reading in this context.

IV

In the desert aggadot, the redeemed state is once again depicted, this time with the emphasis on the ordered nature of the new cosmos. Everything fits into a single harmonious structure, and all focuses on a sacred center. Even the desert itself is said to be a perfect square. In such a cosmos there is little room for change, because any change would destroy the perfect order of the whole. Thus the stress here is on an atemporal, paradisal present, rather than the potentiality for new creation. It is true that some traces of potentiality remain (especially in the miraculous creativity of this paradise, which is perhaps symbolized by the snakes incorporated peacefully into it), just as there are images of atemporality in the paradise of the sea. But there is a marked shift of emphasis here.

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[27] This conclusion will be reinforced by a number of symbolic motifs in the following chapter, which also deals with the desert wandering.

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Perhaps because of this different emphasis, the relationship between chaos and cosmos is also expressed somewhat differently in this chapter than in the previous chapter. In one set of aggadot here, the fauna which represent chaos must be eliminated completely, while another view holds that it was submissive to God's commands. On the one hand the desert is said to be an abyss in which nothing can exist, and on the other hand it is held to be a paradigm for religious experience. In the preceding chapter two central ideas were developed which might resolve the tension in this view of chaos. First, it was seen that the paradise immediately following the cosmogony is a time of new beginnings in which one is acutely aware of the potentiality necessarily inherent in absolute reality. But the paradise spoken of in the present chapter is fully perfected; thus the positive evaluation of chaos cannot be explained by any need for potentiality.

The second idea in the previous chapter was that chaos, while opposing the creation of a new cosmos, is experienced by Israel as an act of God; it is experienced simultaneously with the experience of God's redeeming and cosmicizing acts. An explanation of the significance of chaos in the present chapter may be sought in a deeper understanding of this theme. The ambivalence of chaos is to some extent, in this chapter as well as in the preceding one, a function of the ambivalence of Israel; chaos must destroy them insofar as they are faithless, while it increases their po-

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tentiality for faith insofar as they are faithful. But in the present chapter the nature of this ambivalent function is developed more from God's point of view, as it were, than from man's. The principle is clearly enunciated that, while man smites with one thing and cures with another, God uses the very same thing to smite and to cure, to bring punishment and blessing. Most often, the instrument which God uses is some form of chaos. It is important to stress here the distinction drawn between man and God. In human experience, chaos (smiting) and cosmicization (curing) are two separate and opposed processes, although they may occur simultaneously in some cases. And certainly chaos is a negative, though necessary, experience. Thus the previous chapter, stressing that chaos serves to destroy chaos, may be said to dwell on the human point of view.

This chapter, on the other hand, seems to turn more to the divine viewpoint. There can be no rigid distinction between symbols of cosmos and chaos, because the same instrument functions to produce both. It might be objected that a significant distinction can be made on the basis of the end result achieved. That is, if chaos is used to produce more chaos, it is truly a symbol of chaos, while if it functions to produce cosmos (i.e., curing), it is actually a symbol of cosmos. But from the divine point of view this distinction is not valid, because God is constantly in control of both cosmos and chaos, and His ultimate goal is always cosmos. Thus, if He allows an increase in chaos, it is really a means to increase cosmos. Chaos cannot really be termed negative,

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because it is always an integral part of a positive process. The opposition that man sees between chaos and cosmos is overcome in God's eyes, and the process of cosmicization is the harmonious interaction, controlled by God, of the two. Thus the tension in the evaluation of chaos appears to be a function of man's limited and relative view, which sees chaos and cosmos as separate and then evaluates chaos insofar as it helps or hinders cosmos.

To reverse Eliade's dictum (TO, 94): "What is true in time is not necessarily true of eternity." And as the Israelites repeatedly experience the interrelatedness of chaos and cosmicization, they come ever closer to the experience of *coincidentia oppositorum*, and thus ever closer to the divine dimension of existence. Thus we see the third of Eliade's functions of chaos expressed in the aggada, a function which clearly identifies the experience of chaos with the experience of absolute reality. But in the aggada this experience is simultaneous with the experience of absolute reality in the perfection of cosmos; it would seem that as the experience of chaos is intensified, so is the experience of paradisal cosmos. And once again it is clear that both of these are aspects of the experience of the single absolute reality -- the single God.

CHAPTER V

MANNA, THE WELL, AMALEK

In the previous chapter several paradisal motifs were noted in the context of the desert wandering. However, there are two paradisal symbols in particular which are of such importance that they deserve separate treatments -- the manna from heaven and the miraculous well.

I

The various aggadic texts seem to vie with each other in describing the extravagant amounts of manna which fell upon the Israelite camp: "Sixty cubits was the height of the manna which descended for Israel."(1) "The manna would descend, 2000 cubits every day."(2) "Enough food for 2000 years would descend for Israel each and every day."(3) "Enough food for 4000 years descended for them every day." (4) All of these passages are reminiscent of the vast amounts of food said to grow in the future world, and all convey the same basic message of a plenitude of fertility and life. This theme is also connected with the motif of the ease of getting food: "It was two cubits high so that a man could stand and it would be opposite his heart, and he could take it without any trouble."(5) In this passage the huge size has been lessened, in order to make the point graphically and realistically. But the ease of getting food is also hyperbo-

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lized: "He would sit at the door of his house and gather his sustenance and the sustenance of his family."(6) In a more extreme view, there are various gradations of ease which a man could choose: "He who was industrious would go out and gather it in the field . . . . And the moderately industrious would go out to the door of their tent and gather it, and the lazy ones would lie on their beds and stretch out their hands and it would descend into their hands."(Y 258) In the paradise of the desert the Israelites were deluged with food, and they had to expend no effort at all in getting it.

"The manna descended for them, and in it was every kind of flavor, and every Israelite tasted everything that he wanted."(7) "It is taught that it was transformed for them into every kind of food boiled in a pot . . . . It is taught that it was transformed for them into every kind of food baked in an oven."(8) Here the ubiquity of food is combined with the extreme creativity of the paradisal period -- whatever an individual desires is miraculously and immediately created by virtue of his wish. But another aggada says that not everyone could have every kind of taste: "The manna would only fall for Israel according to the capacity of each individual. The young men would eat it like bread . . . the old men like wafers . . . and the suckling babies like milk from their mothers' breasts."(9) The idea here is that certain kinds of food are naturally suited for certain kinds of people, and eating the wrong kind of food might be harmful. Therefore, since the paradisal cosmos is harmonious, with everything working for the good of every person, the manna was naturally transformed into the right kind of food for each individual.

Although the parallels between the significance of manna and the religious meaning of the future world are fairly obvious, the aggada calls explicit attention to the connection: "From that which I fed them in the desert, which was sweeter than milk and honey, you may know what I will do for them in the end as a reward."(Šir R. I,7,3) Passage (7) above is explicitly said to be a foreshadowing of the life of the world to come in this world. Finally, the aggada asks: "And for whom is it [i.e., the manna] prepared now? For the righteous in the world to come. He who believes merits it and eats."(10) The plenitude of fertility of the redeemed world is a reward for faith.

The symbolic significance of manna is also expressed by using various aspects of water symbolism: "As soon as the sun shone upon it, it would melt and turn into many rivers and flow and run off;"(11) we have seen the significance of rivers as sources of fertility in the redeemed world. "The dew would descend for them, as it is said, 'And with the descent of the dew upon the camp at night the manna descended upon them' -- Israel would go out and gather it."(MT 78.4) This passage should be seen in the context of a widespread aggadic symbol, the dew of resurrection.[1]

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[1] Cf. the many entries on this motif in the Index to Ginzberg, Legends, under "Dew, the dead revived by the."

Clearly, the manna, like the dew, is a source of life to people who have experienced the imminence of death many times over. Finally, the manna is compared to rain: "When the manna was sent down it would descend just as the rain descends, and it has no limit."(12) This is the infinitude of life and fertility which we have seen as characteristic of the paradisal state of the future. Perhaps this passage should be seen as the logical conclusion to the sequence with which this chapter began; the idea of plenitude in increasing quantities leads logically to the idea of infinitude, and the implication here is an infinitude of life brought about by and symbolized in the manna.

The idea that manna symbolizes immortality is strengthened by the aggadic claim that "each and every day it shone like gold, and on the Sabbath even more so."(Mek. RS 107)[2] But a more frequent adaptation of this theme is the following: "The wind would blow across it [i.e., the desert] and it became a kind of table of gold."(13)[3] Another text repeats this idea and then asks: "If God prepared this for those who angered Him, how much more will He reward the righteous in the future?"(Mek. Vayoša‘ 4) And in fact, we noted earlier a passage which describes the righteous in the Garden of Eden eating at a golden table. Thus the manna is also a parallel to the banquet with God in the future world. We may note, too,

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[2] Cf. Chapter II, Section 7, and passage (92) in that same chapter above, on gold and Sabbath.

[3] MT 78.4 reads: "gold and precious stone."

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that since the desert is levelled by the wind, we have the image of a paradisal plain.

The unique status conferred upon Israel through the manna is expressed in an interesting way: "'As fine as the frost upon the ground' -- Just as this frost is fine and the earth swallows it, so the manna was fine and the limbs swallowed it, and there was no one among the Israelites who needed to excrete."(14) God says to Israel: "I made you equal to the ministering angels, and you did not ease yourselves." (15) Thus the manna gave Israel a spiritualized quality, like the angels, and they were free of the normal biological necessities of mankind. The idea that the manna raised the spiritual level of Israel follows the opinion of Eliade that "by means of his food, man participates in a higher reality; he eats something that is rich, strong, and confers prestige; which was created by the Supernatural Beings."(TO, 157)[4]

We have seen that the elevated spiritual state of man in the future world makes him privy to divine wisdom; the same thing is true in this context: "Just as the prophet tells the deepest secrets to Israel, so the manna would tell the deepest secrets to Israel."(16) One passage combines many of the themes related to manna: "All those days, until they did that deed [i.e., the golden calf], they lived before God better than the ministering angels, and the angel of death had no power over them, and they did not have to go out and

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[4] Cf. Tan. B II, 67, which says that "the ministering angels would grind the manna;" i.e., create the supernatural food.

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excrete like men."(17) In this opinion the Israelites have a spiritual status higher than the angels, and they are in the immediate presence of God. They are explicitly said to be immortal, and their freedom from excretion is said to set them apart from humanity and its mortality. Thus the manna renders them equal to the residents of the Garden of Eden in the future world.

It is not surprising that the spiritualizing manna is related to light: "The manna which they asked for according to the halakah was given to them with a shining face."(18) But this passage implies that they were given this mode of spiritualization because they acted according to the halakah, which is both the law and the cosmic order ordained by God. Here again the manna is a reward for faith. This point is made explicit: "What caused you to eat of the manna? Because you received My laws and statutes . . . . By the merit of My bread [i.e., Torah] you took your bread of manna."(SR 25.7) The images of nourishment and spiritualization are used interchangeably, and the message is that if a man is willing to nourish himself spiritually, God will ultimately provide nourishment in infinite measure.

But the status gained by those who ate the manna is not only one of living in a perfected and paradisal cosmos: "Just as this breast which, even if the infant suckles from it the entire day, is not damaged, so was the manna."(19) "Just like this nipple, which is of one kind and changes into many kinds, so would the manna change for Israel into any-

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thing that they wanted."(20) Here the Israelites are again depicted as infants being nourished from the breast. These passages again introduce the idea of potentiality and new beginnings in the midst of a paradisal state.

The theme of the new beginning is applied to the manna in a set of parallel events:

> "And I shall praise Your covenant-love in the morning" -- That morning on which You looked upon the camp of Egypt . . . . Another interpretation: That morning on which You sent down the manna to us . . . . Another interpretation: That morning of the revelation of the Torah."(SR 23.6)

All of these are mornings of cosmicization, for, as we shall see, the revelation is described in many symbols of cosmogony. Thus we find the following interpretation of the manna:

> If the manna, which was of one kind, was changed into many kinds according to the need of each individual, the voice [i.e., God's voice at Sinai] which had so much strength in it, how much more so was it changed for each individual so that he would not be injured? (SR 5.9)

We shall examine this theme in connection with the Sinai events, but the point in this context is that the miraculous nature of the manna, like revelation, is symbolic of the plasticity and creativity of the newly-created cosmos. And the Israelites are said to participate in this creativity.

But the manna, like the staff of Moses, is not only an instrument of blessing: "To the nations it would taste bitter like coriander."(21) This passage continues the parallel between the manna and the revelation. As we shall see, the cosmicizing voice at Sinai brought death to the nations; thus the bitter taste of the manna may also be symbolic of death. "What did they [i.e., the nations] do? They would capture a deer which had drunk from the [melted] manna, and they would taste in it the taste of the manna, and they would say, 'Happy is the nation who has this.'"(22) The manna brings the blessings of paradisal cosmos to those whose faith merits it, and it brings chaos upon the idolators; but according to this last passage it may cause the idolators to acknowledge the true God, and thus it may be an instrument for bringing them into God's cosmos as well.

The effects of the manna are even further complicated; according to one aggada: "You find that on the very day that the manna fell for Israel, they worshipped an idol, and they even went so far as to take some of it and sacrifice it to their idol."(23) Thus, while the manna may bring the nations into the one true cosmic order, it is also used by Israel in rejecting that order and worshipping a counterfeit. Apparently, this attitude continued, for the Israelites asked for meat, which they received in the form of quail. However, "The meat which they asked for improperly was given to them with a dark countenance."(24) The manna, the expression of a proper faith relationship, is related to light, but the quail, the expression of a lack of obedience, is related to darkness. Finally, the manna is related to a change in the cosmic order of nature: "The order of Creation was changed for them; the upper became lower and the lower upper . . . . The bread began to descend from the heavens . . . and the dew to rise from the earth."(25) Thus the manna comes out of a situation of disorder, and it produces ambivalent effects.

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It is said to bring both chaos and cosmos to the nations, and the Israelites respond to it in a similarly ambivalent way. But the dominant significance of the manna seems to be that it symbolizes the Israelites' spiritualization, which is a result of the special faith relationship with God which they have just begun.

II

Throughout their journey in the desert the Israelites are accompanied by a miraculous well of water, called the well of Miriam, which like the manna creates a paradisal situation for them: "When they left Egypt, God brought the well up for them, and they would plant along its waters and the trees would yield fruit the very same day."(Tan. B III,75) "It would raise for them all kinds of delicacies, just like in the world to come."(26) "It would raise for them an infinite number of different kinds of grasses and trees."(27) Here the theme of infinite fertility is combined with the idea of infinite creativity; i.e., an infinitude of different species, as well as infinite amounts of food. The well also contributes to the freedom from effort in the paradisal state: "The well would flow inexhaustibly and go from tent to tent, and no one had to worry about going to a central place to fill up."(28)

The waters of the well are said to have curative properties -- the well is now hidden in the waters of the Sea of Tiberias, and "It happened once that a man stricken with boils went down to bathe in the Sea of Tiberias, and it chanced

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to be the hour that the well of Miriam floated by, and he was cured."(VR 22.4) "It happened once that a blind man went down to the water to bathe, and he chanced to encounter the well of Miriam, and he bathed and was cured."(Ba. R 18.22) But for the Israelites in the desert this water provides more than physical healing: "The waters of the well are pleasing to drink and pleasing to wash in, kind to the body and curative for the soul."(29) The waters of the well are also the source of the spices, whose significance as a paradisal symbol we have seen: "When they camped in the desert the well would raise all kinds of spice plants in their gardens, and the Israelite women would gather them and make all sorts of spices from them"(30)[5] "And for everyone who had no pillow to sleep upon, it would raise grasses with different kinds of soft spices, and he would sleep upon them."(M. Šir 37a)

The waters of the well are assigned an important function in marking off the cosmos of the Israelite camp: "The waters went out of the camp and surrounded it with a large border, as it is said, 'He leads me in paths[6] of righteousness.'"(31) Another version says that the water formed a ditch around the camp (Ba. R 19.26), and we have seen the same idea expressed in the previous chapter. In either case,

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[5] The same source draws a parallel between manna and spices: "When Israel would eat the manna . . . their fragrance would waft like the fragrance of frankincense."

[6] "Paths" (in Hebrew, *maʿagleî*) means literally "circles"; the idea seems to be that the water encircling the camp and demarcating it from the surrounding desert is a source or a symbol of righteousness.

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there is a separation of cosmos and chaos. But the same separation exists between the sacred center -- in this case called "the camp of the Šekînah" -- and the rest of the cosmicized territory: "The water of the well flowed out and became many rivers; one river surrounded the camp of the Šekînah, and from that river there came four rivers flowing to the four corners of the courtyard."(32) This reinforces the image seen earlier of the camp as a four-sectioned entity with an empty middle, and it is reminiscent of the four rivers of the Garden of Eden. The water has another function as well: "A great river surrounded all the camp of Israel, and it was separated into many rivers which flowed between each of the tribes, and the rivers functioned as boundaries between them."(33) Thus the waters of the well impose order on the social as well as the cosmological level.

The well itself was at the very center of the camp, as the source of its order: "Wherever Israel dwelt, it would dwell with them[7] opposite the door of the Tent of Meeting." (Tos. Sukah 3.11) "And how was the well shaped? Like a sort of rock, shaped like a beehive or a bowl."(34) Here again we have the motif of water coming from a rock, and its significance is perhaps made clearer in the following: "So the well which accompanied Israel in the desert was like a rock full of sieve-holes, [water] bubbling up and rising as from the mouth of a jar."(35) The image of "the mouth of a jar" is important because exactly the same words are used to de-

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[7] Some manuscripts add here "in a high place," thus strengthening the image of the well as located at the sacred center.

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scribe the river which comes from the Temple in the future world.[8] And since the water in this case comes from in front of the Tent of Meeting, the prototype and desert equivalent of the Temple, the parallel is fairly certain. Earlier we saw a passage which noted that the waters of the abyss were immediately below the desert floor,[9] and so here too we have an image of the waters of chaos being cosmicized through a rock and flowing for the good of man.

The process by which the water was secured for the people is described in some detail:

> As soon as the tribes were encamped and the Tabernacle standing, the rock would come and situate itself in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting. (Tan. B IV,3) The Princes of Israel would surround it with their staffs and sing to it the song, as it is said, "Arise, well, sing to it." The water would gush out and rise like a pillar above them, and each one would draw it with his staff, each man to his tribe and each to his family. (36)

We have here the images of the staff, symbolic of cosmicization, and the pillar, symbolic of the sacred center. This is perhaps the only passage among all the aggadot studied here which depicts an institutionalized ritual of cosmicization participated in regularly by representatives of all the people.[10] Finally, the aggada says that, "The space between the tribes became filled with powerful waters; a woman who had to go visit her friend in another tribe would go in a ship."(37) The aggada does not want us to picture a small oasis with streams running through it; rather, the image is of an infinitely fertile plain watered by huge rivers, the whole thing set down in the midst of a barren and arid desert. This is actually a movable paradise, which went with the Israelites throughout their journey in the desert, and it is seen to have all of those religious values which comprise the essence of the future redeemed state as well.

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[8] Cf. Chapter II, Section 3 above.

[9] Cf. Chapter IV, passage (34) above: "The earth floats on water."

[10] The ceremony described here may well be a legendary forerunner of the historical "festival of water-drawing" of the second Temple period, described in Mišnah Sukah 4,9 and Tos. Sukah 3,3.

III

Despite the redemption which was manifest and bestowed upon them, however, the Israelites still failed to respond with an enduring faith in God.

> What was Israel like? Like a baby which was riding on its father's shoulders; when he saw something he wanted, he would say to his father, "Get it for me," and he would get it for him. This happened once, twice, a third time. While they were walking, the son saw his father's friend and said to him, "Have you seen my father?" His father said to him, "You fool! You are riding on my shoulders, and I get you whatever you want, and you say, 'Have you seen my father?'" What did he [the father] do? He threw him off of his shoulders, and the dog came and bit him. Thus was Israel: When they came out of Egypt, He immediately surrounded them with the clouds of glory. They wanted manna -- God sent it down to them. They wanted quail -- He sent them. He gave them all their needs. They began to murmur and say: "Is God among us or not?" God said to them: "By your life, I will let you know. Behold the dog comes and bites you." And who is that? Amalek, as it is said, "And Amalek came."(Tan. Yitro)

Despite their continuing immediate experience of God, the people still do not have faith in His ability to rescue them from chaos. And therefore more chaos, in the form of the attack by the Amalekites, come upon them. "The enemy does not come except because of sin and transgression."(38)

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The particular sin which brought the Amalekites is interpreted variously: "'And Amalek came' -- What is written just above this passage? 'And the Israelites journeyed, and there was no water for the people to drink' -- Immediately they came to start a quarrel with Moses and said to him: 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt?'"(39) Here the sin of the people is once again failure to trust in the saving act of God. But the lack of water occurred at R'pîdîm, and "What is the meaning of 'R'pîdîm?' That they loosened [Heb. *rîpu*] themselves from the words of the Torah."(40) Here the lack of water is taken allegorically as a lack of obedience to God's will. Yet another interpretation is: "If they had observed the first Sabbath, no nation or people could have ruled them. But it is said, 'On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather,' and it is written after that, 'And Amalek came.'"(41) Since the Sabbath is a paradigm of the redeemed state, this passage seems to say that the people were offered the perfection of a redeemed state immediately, but since they rejected it, they brought more chaos upon themselves. Insofar as they rejected the redemption offered by God, the Israelites are really no different from the Amalekites. Thus God says: "Let the ungrateful Amalek come and take revenge on the ungrateful people [i.e., Israel]."(42)

Finally, the sin of the Israelites is said to be "testing" God: the people said, "If we think to ourselves and He knows what we are thinking, we will serve Him, but if not, we will rebel against Him. God said to them, 'If you wanted to test Me, the wicked one will come and test you.' Immediately, 'And Amalek came.'"(43) Thus the chaos symbolized by Amalek is said to be a testing of Israel.[11] But the chronology of events here is important. The people rebelled at R'pîdîm, where there was no water. However, God did not send chaos upon them immediately. Rather, he told Moses to strike the rock and get water (and the aggada says that the miraculous well was first established at this time). Thus the paradisal situation is established as a response to the chaos of drought which the people had to endure. Only after this is more chaos -- the Amalekites -- sent as a response to the chaos of rebellion. The "testing" by the attack of Amalek is not a prerequisite to the experience of the paradisal state; rather, the two are experienced simultaneously, and both arise from the same act of rebellion.

The existence of the paradisal state is especially important because it affords a measure of protection from the Amalekites. "Moses said to Joshua: 'Go out from under the wings of the cloud and fight against Amalek.'"(44) "From this you learn that they were under the clouds of glory." (SR 26.3) And in fact we have seen that the clouds play a central role in marking off the cosmos of the paradise from the chaos which surrounds it. "The pillar of cloud would surround the camp of Israel as a city is surrounded by a wall . . . . And Amalek would attack from the rear and kill

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[11] Note again the exact correspondence between the offense of the people and the response of God; just as chaos begets chaos, so "testing" begets "testing."

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all those who were outside the cloud in the rear."(45) "Everyone who was cast out by the cloud was attacked."(46) In other words, so long as an individual was under the protection of the cloud he was safe from the threat of chaos. But why did the cloud cast people out? One reason (given in several commentaries) is that the cosmos of the camp demanded ritual purity of the people. Those who threatened to defile the camp had to wait outside until their time of impurity was past. The same idea is interpreted in a less ritualistic way: "He would only kill people who had gone astray from the ways of God and were left behind the protection of the wings of the cloud."(47) Here again the chaos of disobedience is the cause of death.

But the cosmos protected by the cloud was not totally immune to attack. One text claims that Amalek would "kidnap the Israelites and kill them."(Mek. RS 119)[12] "He would stand outside the clouds of glory and call to each one by name and say, 'So and so come out, for I want to transact some business with you.' One would go out and he would kill him."(PR 52a) The central point in all these passages is that no one who was within the protective boundaries of the clouds of glory could be killed. Clearly, residing in a cosmos gives protection against the chaos outside. However, there are those who will choose not to submit to the rules of the cosmos, and those who will allow themselves to be seduced

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[12] "Kidnap" (in Hebrew, *goneb nepeš*), literally means "steal the soul;" cf. Jastrow, *Dictionary*, p. 256.

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out of the cosmos, and these people are subject to all of the evils inherent in chaos.

The punishment awaiting those who went out and were attacked by Amalek is not simply death: "What did Amalek do to them? He would cut off their phalluses and would throw them up above and say, 'Is this what you want? Behold it is given to you!'"(48) This motif emphasizes that death is an end to the vital force of life which is so important in the redeemed cosmos. But in particular it is a parody on circumcision,[13] and it shows that the sinners of Israel, like the Egyptians, must suffer a real, rather than merely symbolic, castration.

There are two other passages which connect Amalek with sexuality. "'Who attacked you on the way' --'Attacked [Heb. qar] you' means made you impure, as it is said, 'An emission [Heb. miqreh, from the same root as qar] at night.'" (49) Here, as in passage (46) explained above, the attack of Amalek is connected with ritual impurity, in this case specifically caused by the sexual function. A second passage seems to indicate that Israel in the desert paradise was innocent of sexuality altogether: "Israel did not know the nature of the branch [i.e., the phallus], but 'Behold they put the branch to their nose;' as soon as Amalek came, he taught them about it."(50)[14] The implication here is that

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[13] "In this way did he jeer at the token of the Abrahamic covenant."(Ginzberg, Legends, III, p. 57)

[14] According to Jastrow, Dictionary, p. 402, the "idolatrous" use of the phallus is what Amalek taught Israel.

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in the paradisal state there is a plenitude of life without a consciousness of the sexual function. Amalek represents chaos both by cutting off the life force and by stimulating sexuality, especially of an illicit and defiling nature.

In the face of this pervasive threat of chaos, Moses orders the Israelite army, under Joshua's command, to go out and wage war against Amalek. Eliade's comments concerning the meaning of war seem pertinent here; he refers to the "ritual role of hostilities. Each time the conflict is repeated, there is an imitation of an archetypal model."(CH, 29) "Enemies are assimilated to demonic powers trying to reincorporate the microcosm into the state of chaos."(IS, 38) Clearly, the archetypal model for this war is the battle between God and Rahab, between cosmos and chaos. However, in the aggadic view, the Amalekites are more demonic than other enemies: "I have seen that all of the nations wage war only until six o'clock, but this reprehensible nation wages war from morning until evening."(Mek. RS 123) The Amalekites are so much the antithesis of order that they do not even obey the order of war. And, in passage (44) above, it is indicated that the Israelites must leave the cosmicized territory under the clouds and go into the land of chaos in order to overcome this powerful force of chaos. As we saw, this necessity to experience chaos arises directly from their rebellion against God, which perhaps explains the aggadic statement: "We have learned that this war only occurred by the command of God."(51)

But ultimately Amalek is defeated by the command of

God as well. Central to the Biblical version of the story is the idea that when Moses raised his hands, Israel was victorious. In his hand Moses held the staff, and according to the aggada, he said to God: "With this staff you took them out of Egypt and split the sea for them . . . . With this staff may you do miracles and heroic deeds for them at this time."(Mek. RS 121) But the aggada asks: "Did Moses' hands really strengthen Israel or did his hands destroy Amalek?" Here again we have the idea that Moses' hands, like the staff which he held, did not have any power in themselves. The same passage goes on to say: "But whenever Moses raised his hands toward heaven, Israel would look toward heaven and believe in the One who commanded Moses to do this, and God would do miracles and heroic deeds for them."(Mek. Amalek 1) This is a familiar pattern: the chaos of lack of faith brings more chaos upon Israel, until nothing is left to them but the remnant of true faith which they have. Yet that faith is enough to save them and bring about the defeat of chaos and reestablishment of cosmos.

The fact that a new cosmos is brought about here is expressed in an aggadic reinterpretation of a Biblical verse: "'The flowers [Heb. *niẓanim*] appeared on the earth' -- the conquerors [Heb. *niẓoḥot*] appeared on the earth. And who are these? Moses and Aaron."(52) Military victory is compared to the rebirth of plant life because it symbolizes the birth of a new cosmos with the victory over chaos. This point is made more explicit: "As long as the seed of Amalek is in

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the world the Name [of God] is not complete and the Throne is not complete; when the seed of Amalek is banished from the world, the Throne is complete and the Name complete."(53)

In ensuring the victory of cosmos, God makes use of a particular miracle: "Where do we find that the sun stood still for Moses? When he waged war against Amalek."(SER 10) This extra daylight gives the Israelite army time to complete the battle, but it also seems to involve two symbolic motifs. First, it indicates that the defeat of chaos takes place when the normal flow of time is suspended, and a sort of atemporal interlude established. Second, this atemporality comes about through a suspension of the normal cosmic alternation of day and night, which may be seen as a measure of chaos.[15] Conversely, the Amalekites are said to have a measure of order within their army: "'And Joshua cut down Amalek' -- For he went down and cut off the heads of the warriors standing at the front of the ranks [Heb. šurot]."(Mek. RS 123) The Amalekites did battle arranged in orderly ranks, just as the Israelites desired to be formed in ranks on the model of the angels. And, like the Egyptians, once their order was destroyed, we may assume that the Amalekites fell into total chaos. Thus a measure of chaos supported the Israelites, when the sun stopped, while the Amalekites used order to try to impose chaos on Israel. Once again we see that chaos and cosmos are not always strictly opposed to each other; even

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[15] On the relationship between the cessation of natural movement and the reversion to primordial chaos, cf. SR 29.9, cited in Chapter VI, Part III, p.250.

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in the clear-cut distinction between Israel and Amalek a small measure of complexity is introduced. And the ultimate significance of each particular instance appears in the final victory of cosmos over chaos.

IV

The discussion of manna and the well in this chapter fills out the picture given in the previous chapter of the desert paradise, and it confirms that all of the religious values inherent in the future paradise are found here as well. The manna symbolizes the infinitude of life, as does the well. In the latter case, however, water symbolism is used particularly to stress the high degree of order which we have seen as characteristic of the paradisal cosmos.[16] With the manna we also have some stress on the creativity and potentiality of new beginnings, and especially the interesting motif of spiritualization and transcendence of the human biological condition. This motif has appeared before, in connection with the "mastery of fire" and symbolisms of ascension, and its connection with redemption and chaos should be considered.

The idea of spiritualization is very important in Eliade's understanding of religion. One of the central dimensions of religious experience, in his view, is the desire to transcend the limitations of the human condition. He speaks of "a longing to see the human body behaving like a 'spirit,' to transmute the corporeal modality of man into a spiritual modality."(MDM, 107) One means of attaining this is to become contemporary with the beginning of the cosmos through myth and ritual: "One ceases to exist in the everyday world and enters a transfigured, auroral world impregnated with the Supernaturals' presence."(MR, 19) A very important means of spiritual growth is initiation: "Participation in spiritual life is made possible by virtue of the religious experience released during initiation."(RSI, xiii) Knowledge of the true, sacred reality "is accessible only in the course of, or following upon, the process of spiritual regeneration realised by initiatory death and resurrection."(MDM, 226) However, he points out (MDM, 98) that the ideal for religious man is to live in a spiritualized, paradisal cosmos, but to live in it physically -- "*in concreto*" -- as well as spiritually. To be only body or only spirit is a choice which "fallen" historical man must make; the first men were both simultaneously. But given the present situation, man longs to transcend the body, to experience an "ontological mutation" which will give him access to the true reality, the world of the spirit.

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[16] This is a good example of the multi-valence and integrating power of symbols. In previous chapters water has been a prime symbol of vitality and the plenitude of life. The emphasis on order here indicates that, in the aggada as a whole, water symbolizes the totality of religious experience in the redeemed state. The same point could, of course, be made for many other symbols studied here.

In the aggadot of the desert wandering, the Israelites are pictured as having attained to the religious ideal; they are physically human, yet they have transcended the biological limitations of humanity and have attained a spiritual state like that of the angels.[17] In the redemptive act they have become contemporary with the cosmogony, experienced initiation, and gained access to divine wisdom. Yet at the same time, they refuse to accept this status fully. Every symbolism of paradisal spirituality is connected with or followed by an episode of rebellion and faithlessness, a separation from God who is the source of all spirit.[18]

God's response to Israel's rebellion tells us much about the meaning of chaos. He does not withdraw the paradise, the realm of spirituality, as a means of punishment. Rather, He sends a new form of chaos, makes the people experience that chaos, and then replaces it with a corresponding paradisal feature which serves to enlarge the scope of the paradise. He sends hunger upon them, but then gives them the manna. He sends thirst to them, but then gives them the well. Yet they still do not believe in Him fully, so rather than withdrawing this paradise, He makes them leave it temporarily to fight with Amalek. The point here is that God forces the people to experience chaos while they are residents of a paradisal state, and thus while they are still spiritualized and "more than human."

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[17] The insistence on bodily resurrection in the future, and the descriptions of the culmination of redemption which will appear in the following chapter, leave no doubt that a spiritualization _in concreto_ was always the goal of the aggadic tradition.

[18] One is tempted to speculate that these rebellions may be, in part, directed against the fact of spiritualization itself, motivated by fear that the process might go too far and deprive the people of their humanity completely. However, there is really no evidence to this effect.

Now we have seen at least three effects of chaos on the Israelites. It "dissolves" the chaos -- i.e., faithlessness -- within them, rendering them like embryos with the potentiality for a new spiritual life, and it allows them to see the interrelatedness of chaos and cosmos, bringing them closer to the divine viewpoint. In each case chaos serves to help them transcend the human condition even further. Moreover, the experience of chaos is always an experience of an act of God. Thus there is no conflict between living in a spiritual state and experiencing chaos. Rather, the episodes of chaos are used by God to expand and intensify the spiritualization of the people. Furthermore, in the case of Amalek as in the case of Egypt, the chaos which God produces dissolves the enemies of Israel -- the forces of chaos -- completely, thus allowing Israel to live in a newly-created cosmos following the destruction of chaos. The Israelites in this way come increasingly closer to the status of those who live _in_ _illo_ _tempore_. They dwell in a paradisal state which is continually being enlarged, and they are always being brought closer to God and a perfect experience of Him.

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CHAPTER VI

THE REVELATION AT SINAI

I

The culmination of the journey through the desert, and the culmination of the redemptive acts of God, is the revelation at Sinai. Encamped at the foot of the mountain, the Israelites continue to dwell in a paradisal state, but this state is further enhanced by the immediate presence of God and His celestial world: "God bent down the lower heaven and the many upper heavens upon the top of the mountain like a man who spreads a cushion upon a bed."(1) Here we see clearly the symbolism of the mountain which mediates between man on earth and the pure spirituality of the celestial realm, allowing the two to come in contact. "God descended upon Mount Sinai, and with Him were 22,000 chariots of ministering angels."(MT 68.10) Another view quoted in the same passage raises the number to 42,000, and a third merely says, "a number so large that you would need an accountant[1] to figure it -- thousands upon thousands of thousands and tens of thousands upon tens of thousands."(2) This sequence of opinions appearing in the same passage shows how the aggada uses increasingly larger magnitudes to give a concrete picture and yet suggest infinitude. Another text gives the logical conclusion

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[1] "Accountant" (in Hebrew, *pasîpasṭas*) follows the translation of the published ET.

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of this sequence: "Tens of thousands means that there is no counting them, thousands means that they have no number." (3)[2] This picture of a space filled with an infinitude of heavenly beings certainly implies that the Israelites' paradise is less corporeal and more spiritual than before.

The aggada makes it clear that the paradise of Sinai is a finite and bounded cosmic territory separated from the earthly world. "'And you shall set a boundary for the people' -- I might think that this means only to the east. Therefore it says, 'All around.'"(4) One text gives an interesting development of this motif; elaborating on the Biblical verse, "A time to gather stones," it says: "And You brought them to Mount Sinai and gathered them and set them up around the mountain, as it is said, 'And you shall make the people a boundary all around,' and Israel is called 'stones.'" (M. T'murah 112) Here the people themselves are said to be the stones on the boundary between cosmos and chaos, and from what we have seen about the ambivalence of the Israelites, this is a very fitting symbolism.[3]

The Sinai paradise is depicted as a cosmic circle, and it is further said to be marked by a divine quaternity: "When God revealed Himself to give Israel the Torah, He was not revealed from just one direction, but from all four direc-

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[2] Cf. Agg. Šir 1,4 for the same opinion.

[3] Previously we have seen several instances in which stones or rocks transform salt water or the waters of chaos into fresh water or the waters of cosmos. In these instances the stone stands on the border line between chaos and cosmos and mediates between the two. Here the Israelites, likened to stones, seem to perform the same symbolic function.

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tions."(Mek. RS 138) According to Ginzberg,[4] the following passage indicates that the "four gates of heaven" were opened: "'And there were voices' . . . . The voice of [God's] speech, the voice of the trumpet, the voice of thunder, and the voice of rocks exploding."(5) The idea of cosmic order is also found in a motif which we have seen before: "22,000 chariots of angels . . . and all of them were arranged regiment upon regiment."(6) "There was Michael and his regiment, Gabriel and his regiment. [Israel] said, 'Would that we travel in such a heavenly arrangement.' At that moment God said, 'Since My children desire to be arranged in regiments, let them camp by regiments.'"(6a) Thus Israel wants to follow the celestial model and become more like the angels, and God grants them this wish once again at the time of the revelation. But there is a further meaning to this motif, specifically connected with revelation: "The assembly of Israel said . . . 'He gave me there the regimental flags of Torah, commandments, and good deeds.'"(7) The cosmic order of Torah and law is the basis of Israel's ordered life and is directly analogous to the heavenly order of the angels.

The idea that Israel was raised to a higher spiritual level is expressed in other ways, too:

> When they all stood before Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, it is taught that there was no one among them blind . . . no one dumb . . . no one deaf . . . no one lame . . . no one feeble-minded. (Mek. Baḥodeš 9) No one with an unclean discharge and no one with leprosy . . . no one insane and no one with a doubting mind.(8) No one among them had even a headache or a toothache. (Mek. RS 154)

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[4] Ginzberg, Legends, VI, p. 35.

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Thus they were free from even the slightest limitations due to human infirmity, and free as well from religious faults both ritual and spiritual. There is a direct connection between the Torah and this healing of all ills: "God said to Moses, 'The words of the Torah which I have given you are life for you and healing for you.'"(Mek. RS 105) The implication here is that so long as Israel continues to obey the Torah it will maintain this level of more than human perfection. God says to Israel: "I am making a renewal and regeneration within you and making you like an exemplar of the world to come."(10)[5] And indeed the curing of all ills is one of the marks of redemption in the future. Furthermore, this healing is seen as a prerequisite for revelation as well as redemption: "God said, 'The Torah is completely perfect . . . . Should I give it to this generation which has people with defects among it?' What did God do? He cured them . . . He who was blind could see, etc."(9) Revelation, in the aggada, means raising the people to the level of spiritual perfection embodied in the Torah, rather than lowering the Torah to suit the people.

The Hebrew word for "perfect" and "perfection" is *š'leîmah*, which actually means "wholeness" and "integrity." This theme is enlarged on in the aggada, using the term "peace" (Heb. *šalom*) which is derived from the same root: "God said, 'The Torah is entirely peace, and to whom shall I give it? To a nation which loves peace.'"(Tan. B II, 74) We

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[5] Note here that revelation and healing are directly

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saw earlier that Israel had been "travelling in discord and camping in discord;"[6] however, "As soon as they came to Mount Sinai they were all transformed into a single encampment . . . 'And Israel camped [Heb. *vay'ḫan*, a singular verb] there' -- God said, 'Behold, this is the hour in which I shall give the Torah to My children.'"(11) This spirit of unity is internal as well as external: "A single encampment was put into their hearts so that they would love one another and would receive the Torah."(Mek. RS 137) "Here it says, 'And Israel camped [Heb. *vay'ḫan*] there' -- They were all harmonized and of a single mind."(12) "They were like one body and one soul."(Mek. RS 139)

It was necessary that every single Israelite be brought into this unified national body: "For if Israel had been lacking even one of its members there, they wouldn't have been worthy of receiving the Torah."(BR 70.9) And this does not mean only those alive at the time of the revelation: "Even all those destined to be created unto the end of all generations stood there with them at Mount Sinai."(13) This makes it clear that the redemption spoken of here is not an individual matter; whatever happens happens to the nation as a whole, and not until the nation is unified can any of its members attain spiritual perfection. Thus the *šalom* (wholeness and integrity) created within any individual seems to

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linked with renewal and regeneration. See Part II of this chapter for further development of the theme of revelation as renewal.

[6] Cf. Chapter IV, passage (50) and n. 25 above.

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depend on a prior _šalom_ of the entire group, and the unity of the group is reflected in the spiritual integrity of the individual.

According to the aggada, the lack of inner unity in man is due to his having two opposed inclinations, one for good and one for evil; but at Sinai, "The good inclination and the evil inclination that were within them were both transformed into a single unified inclination for good."(14) This moral/religious inner unity is a prime mark of the transformation which Israel underwent in the process of redemption. And we find in the aggadot concerning the future redemption that each and every Jew will return to the land of Israel before that redemption is consummated,[7] while in the paradise of the future world there is no inclination for evil. In sum, this state of wholeness is another important aspect of the transcendence of the human condition.

We have noted in previous chapters that two specific symbols of transcending the human condition are ascension and the "mastery of fire;" both of these are found in connection with Sinai. "Just as this eagle rises from below to above in a very short time, so does Israel rise from below to above in a very short time."(Mek. RS 138)[8] There is also a suggestion

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[7] This theme is mentioned in several of the sources cited in MG. MG 105 seems to imply that the return of every Israelite is the final consummation of the eschatological redemption in itself. Cf. also SZ 83, which describes the reconciliation of the northern and southern tribes of ancient Israel, producing a national unity.

[8] The context of this passage relates it specifically to Sinai.

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of ascension in the following, since the mountain is Israel's link with God: "Mount Sinai was uprooted from its place and the heavens opened up, and the top of the mountain entered heaven."(15) This ascension of the mountain affected Moses particularly, since he was on top of the mountain, and in fact we find that, "Moses had his feet standing on the mountain, and all of him[9] was within heaven."(16) Here, too, we see that Moses, in his own ascension, plays the same intermediary role as the mountain itself, standing between the spiritual and the corporeal. Moses is also depicted as a master of fire: "The Torah which was given to Moses had skin of white fire and was written in black fire[10] and was sealed in fire and wrapped in fire . . . and while he was writing, he wiped off the pen on his hair and from that he got the brightness on his face."(DR III, 12) Moses not only handles fire, but also dwells in fire: "'And the smoke [of Sinai] rose like the smoke of a furnace' . . . . If like a furnace it might mean only like an ordinary furnace. Therefore it says, 'And the mountain burning with fire unto the midst of heaven.'" (17)[11]

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[9] "All of him" is in Hebrew kulo; the published ET renders it as "all his body;" the central point is the paradox that while Moses was entirely in heaven (i.e., spiritual), he still "had his feet on the ground" (i.e., was somehow still rooted in the corporeal world).

[10] Cf. Chapter II, passage (38) above, which says that one wall of the Garden of Eden is of white fire mixed with black fire.

[11] Cf. the aggadic idea that the Exodus from Egypt was like a man being drawn out of a furnace (Chapter III, Part II, above). The significances of this symbolism pointed out there may be applicable to Moses' experience here as well.

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Here, too, the Israelites participate in this symbolism of transcendence, although to a lesser degree than Moses:[12] "They saw the fiery speech come out of God's mouth and be engraved on the tablets."(Mek. Baḥodeš 9) "'And the appearance of the Glory of God was like a devouring fire atop the mountain in the eyes of the Israelites' -- There were seven curtains of fire which were grinding against each other, and Israel looked upon them and was neither scared nor frightened." (18) This passage indicates that the experience of God is an experience of fire which Israel was able to endure; it is also interesting if compared to the image of Jerusalem in the future world, which is surrounded by seven walls of fire said to be a manifestation of God's presence.[13] Finally, the Torah which the Israelites receive is said to be fire: "The Torah is fire and it was given out of fire and it is compared to fire."(Mek. Baḥodeš 4) And the symbolic significance of receiving this fire and attaining mastery of it may be found in the following: "Just as fire lives forever, so the words

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[12] It would be possible to interpret the experiences of Moses at Sinai as paradigmatic and therefore symbolically expressive of the experience of Israel as a whole. In passage (76) below Moses is said explicitly to represent Israel and to have the contact with God which the people as a whole should properly have. And the experiences of Moses at Sinai, particularly his journey through heaven and hell, are parallel to, although more intense and extreme than, the experiences of Israel as a whole. Cf. Ginzberg, Legends, III, pp. 109-114. However, there is not enough evidence to confirm the validity of such an interpretation. Therefore, this study is confined principally to the experience of the Israelites. The experience of Moses at Sinai actually deserves a separate study in itself.

[13] Cf. passage (25) below for an explicit analogy between Sinai and the future Jerusalem.

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of the Torah live forever."(Mek. RS 143) The mastery of Torah, like the mastery of fire, symbolizes a transcendence of temporality and therefore of human mortality.

Like the residents of the future world, the Israelites at Sinai are allowed to learn cosmic secrets hidden from normal men. "At that time God opened the seven heavens and showed Israel everything that is within them."(M. Šir 2b) But God had a particular reason for doing this: "God immediately opened the seven heavens and the seven earths for them and said, 'See -- you are my witnesses -- that there is none like Me in the heavens or on earth.'"(M. Aś. HaD. 69) However, Israel was not satisfied with this:

> They said, "Our wish is to hear from our King . . . our wish is to see our King" . . . God said, "I will give them what they asked for."(Mek. RS 140)
> And the heavens were opened and God showed His Glory to Israel.(19)
> The least person in the days of Moses saw what Ezekiel the great and all the prophets never saw; people with whom the Šekînah spoke face to face.(20)
> A maid-servant of Israel saw what the greatest prophet never saw. (Mek. RS 154)

As we shall see later, at a certain point the Israelites were in danger of dying, "But they had seen God, and anyone who sees God does not die."(21)[14] "When Israel stood before Mount Sinai and said, 'We will do and we will obey,' God called to the angel of death and said, 'Even though I have appointed you universal executioner over all my creatures, you shall have nothing to do with this nation."(22) Here immortality is granted as a reward for the professed obedience of Israel rather than merely being the result of seeing God.

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[14] This passage is in direct contradiction to its Biblical source, Ex. 33:20, which states that anyone who

However, the aggada also says that, "Israel only accepted the Torah so that the angel of death would have no power over them."(TB A.Z. 5a) In this view, the obedience of Israel is only a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. Once again the Israelites refuse to give unconditioned faith, being more concerned with the reward that God will give them. However, conditional faith merits only a conditional reward, which is liable to be revoked. And in fact, such a revocation occurs when the people desert God for the golden calf. However, even after losing their immortality, they have a special spiritual status, for "When they died, the worms and maggots had no power over them."(PRE 98a), the idea being that their bodies were free from the decay that humans are subject to.

Once again the ambivalence of the Israelites is reflected in the ambivalence of the aggadic view; the faith of the people is said to be both unconditional and conditional. But all of the sources agree on one point -- at Sinai the people are immortal, and they have seen God as well. Thus they have been raised to their pinnacle of spiritual attainment. This is explicitly said to be a parallel to the redeemed state of the future: "God created seven mountains and from all of them He chose only Mount Sinai . . . . God created se-

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sees God would immediately die. It is altogether possible that what the aggadists intended by the term "see God" was quite different from what the Biblical writer meant.

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ven worlds and from all of them He chose only the seventh world [i.e., the world to come]."(MT 92.2)[15] And, as in the future world, a corollary of immortality is freedom: "'And the writing was the writing of God graven [Heb. *ḥarut*] upon the tablets' -- Don't read 'graven,' but rather 'freedom' [Heb. *ḥerut*] . . . .Freedom from the angel of death . . . . Freedom from the kingdoms . . . . Freedom from suffering." (23)[16] In summary, the Israelites' transcendence of the human condition at the time of the revelation is well expressed in the aggadic statement: "All of those of the generation which heard the voice of God at Mount Sinai attained the status of ministering angels."(24)

The elevated spiritual level created by the revelation of God is emphasized by drawing a parallel between Sinai and the future Jerusalem. The aggada, after describing the infinite number of angels which descended on the mountain, asks: "And could the mountain hold all of them? But God said to it, 'Widen yourself and lengthen yourself and receive the children of your Lord.'"(25) Another version of this aggada adds: "And in the same way you find that in the world

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[15] This idea of redemption as attaining the seventh world reminds one of the mystical *yordeî Merkabah*, whose goal was to attain the seventh heaven -- the palace of God -- in their mystical ascents. And we saw above that the people at Sinai learned what was in the seventh heaven because God showed it to them. Thus the aggadic view of redemption draws from both the historically oriented apocalyptic tradition and the fundamentally ahistorical *Merkabah* tradition. But what the aggada really points up is the common core of religious experience underlying both these traditions; cf. Gershom G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), p. 43.

[16] Cf. BR 53.7: "When the Torah came into the world, freedom came into the world."

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to come God will enlarge Jerusalem."(Tan. Ẓav 12) There is a suggestion that the angels are to be identified with the priestly function carried out in Jerusalem's Temple: "22,000 descended in the camp of God, the same number as in the camp of the Levites."(MT 68.10) But more explicitly, all of Israel are said to be priests at Sinai: "'A kingdom of priests and a holy nation' -- From this verse they said that Israel was entitled to eat of the sacrifices[17] until they made the calf."(26) In ancient Israel the difference between priest and laity was a qualitative difference in spiritual status,[18] and thus the point here is that all of the people shared in this privileged spiritual state.

"These are the three crowns with which Israel was crowned: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of kingship."(Mek. RS 139) By virtue of receiving the Torah the Israelites were raised to a spiritual level which is symbolized not only by calling them priests, but also by calling them kings. One text says that the crowns they received were "crowns of fire"(Agg. Šir 1,4), which should be interpreted in the context of the mastery of fire motif. But this fire is of a special spiritual nature:

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[17] This was a privilege reserved for the priesthood in ancient Israel.

[18] No laymen could ever become priests. On the other hand, the difference between rabbi and layman has always been merely quantitative; any person with sufficient learning could aspire to become a rabbi. In theory, at least, there is no substantive spiritual distinction or unbridgeable gap between rabbinate and laity. In this sense, becoming a priest symbolizes a higher spiritual attainment than becoming a rabbi.

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"600,000 ministering angels came and set upon each and every Israelite two crowns."(TB Šabbat 88a), to which Rashi adds: "From the radiance [Heb. ziv] of God."[19] Another text says that each Israelite received "a crown of the Ineffable Name" (PRE 112a), which stresses the cosmicizing significance of the kingship theme by relating it to the cosmicizing power of God's Name. The motif of two crowns is used to relate the symbolism of kingship to the Torah itself: "They would tie two crowns to each and every word that came out of God's mouth."(27)[20] Finally, the two crowns are explained: "One for 'We will do' and one for 'We will obey.'"(M. Aś. HaD. 68) The suggestion here is that the Israelites themselves participated in that cosmicizing and life-giving power which is attributed to the words of the Torah by consenting to carry out and follow those words. By this participation they attained the status of kings.

Similar to the motif of two crowns is the one which says that two angels descended for each Israelite; "One would put a crown on his head and one would gird him with a weapon." (28) These weapons, too, are of a spiritual nature: "He outfitted them with weapons, and the Ineffable Name was written upon them, and all the time that they had them in their hands neither the angel of death nor anything harmful could affect

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[19] Cf. SR 51.8 for the same motif. In Chapter II, passage (44) above the two motifs of the crowns and God's radiance are directly linked in describing the righteous in the Garden of Eden.

[20] The reference here is to small designs placed above certain letters in the Torah-scroll, which are called "crowns."

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them."(29) Clearly, it is the divine name which gives these weapons their power; they remind us of the staff of Moses which has God's name engraved on it. The weapons appear to have the same value as the crowns with the divine name, and like the crowns they are analogous to the Torah: "The words of the Torah are compared to a weapon; just as this weapon preserves the life of its owner in time of war, so the words of the Torah preserve life."(30) The war meant here is probably the war between cosmos and chaos; the spiritual weapon insures the victory of cosmos and the continuance of life.

Yet another version of the motif of two angels for each Israelite says: "One would give crowns and one would gird him with girdles."(31) The significance of girdles also seems to be in its symbolism of monarchy, for another aggada says, "He dressed them in royal purple"(32), and all of these themes are apparently analogous: "He gave them crowns to wear . . . He gave them weapons . . . He dressed them in royal purple . . . He dressed them in girdles. And when they sinned, God took all of this beneficence away from them."(33)[21] In this passage we have a summary of all the monarchical symbols which were bestowed upon Israel at Sinai. As we saw in Chapter Two, the monarch stands at the center of the cosmos, securing its order and bestowing life upon it, and thus he shares directly in the various modalities of the sacred. At Sinai, too, God is revealed as a monarch: "God opened the seven heavens and was revealed to them, eye to eye, in His beauty and His glory and His handsome appearance and with His crown and the Throne of His Glory."(34) Thus to be a king means in some sense to imitate God.

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[21] Throughout the aggadic sources it is affirmed that these gifts will be returned to Israel in the future redeemed world. This affirmation is one example of the aggada's explicit avowal that the future world is a restoration of the conditions of the past redemption.

But there is a paradox in this symbolism of royalty. On the one hand the king is more than human, closer to the nature of God, and thus represents a higher level of spirituality. On the other hand, he is at the center, the source of life and order for the material world. In Chapter Two this royal symbolism was identified closely with the tremendous fertility and abundant material life of the future world. Now, as mentioned above, Eliade points out the conflict between the spiritual and bodily modes of religious experience, a conflict which seems to be reconciled in the image of the king. Yet it is a striking fact that the aggadic descriptions of the Sinai revelation are almost totally lacking in the images of material well-being and abundant life which are so common in the other paradisal descriptions.

For the most part, in the Sinai aggadot, the few images of material life are connected with the Torah itself: "The words of the Torah are compared to water, to wine, to oil, to honey, and to milk."(Šir R. I,2,3) This is reminiscent of the four rivers which are said to flow out of the Garden of Eden. On the basis of this natural imagery we find two descriptions of Mount Sinai: "'And behold a well in the

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field' -- this is Sinai."(BR 70.9)[22] "The assembly of Israel said, 'May God bring me to the great wine-cellar' -- this is Sinai."(35) "With each and every word that came out of God's mouth the whole world was filled with spices; since it was filled with the first word, where did the spices of the second word go? God brought out a wind from His storehouses and blew the first one away."(TB Šabbat 88b); Rashi adds here, "Blew the first one to the Garden of Eden." Another text says: "To where did they [the spices] go? God hid them away for the righteous."(36) Apparently these are the same spices which are given to the righteous in the Garden of Eden. And Israel at Sinai participated directly in this symbol of paradise: "Israel gave off a pleasing odor before Mount Sinai."(Šir R. I, 12,1) But these few passages represent the sum of material paradisal imagery surrounding Sinai.

Of course, we have seen that the Israelites lived in a "movable paradise," which must have been with them at Sinai. But for the moment of revelation this aspect of their experience is secondary in the aggada. Apparently the aggada chooses to emphasize the spiritual nature of their experience at the expense of the physical. Yet the general context of the aggadic narratives makes it clear that the revelation is experienced *in concreto*, not by disembodied spirits. If we take the Sinai aggadot in the context of all that has gone before, what we really find is a sort of completion of the perfection of religious experience. That is, up until now the material and bodily aspects of redemption have been emphasized; at Sinai, a high level of spiritualization is added to that, without negating the material dimension. Thus the Israelites are now fully redeemed, living in material perfection -- a perfect cosmos with infinite life -- and yet having the status of angels and living in the immediate presence of God.

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[22] Here again we have an image of water coming from a rock. In this case the water is explicitly said to symbolize (or be equivalent to) the Torah; thus we see that water and Torah have similar meanings as religious symbols of redemption. Does Mount Sinai, like the other rocks which bring forth water, mediate between chaos and cosmos? Does the revelation of the Torah imply a cosmicization of a previously chaotic source? Part II of this chapter will make it clear that revelation is a form of cosmicization.

II

The images of intensified spirituality at Sinai are directly related to the idea of living in a newly-founded world: "God descended to Sinai to give the commandments so that the world would not collapse."(37) "As soon as they said, 'We will do and we will obey' the world was settled upon its foundations, as it is said, 'I set out its pillars, Selah.'"(38) In the last part of this passage the word "I" [Heb. *ʾanokî*] refers to the first word of the revelation at Sinai, and thus it is God's spoken word which actually establishes the world order. In these passages the idea seems to be that the world already existed, but that it had no fixed or secure order until the revelation. The idea is also developed in an exact parallel to the Exodus: "Until Israel received the Torah, the world was a wilderness, but as soon

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as they received the Torah, the world became habitable."(39)[23]

We are told that the hour of revelation was "the hour in which life was given to all people in the world."(Mek. RS 142) The life-giving force of God's word may also be implied in the following: "The earth said, 'It seems that the time of the resurrection of the dead has arrived, and God is claiming from me that which He deposited with me.'"(PR 100a)[24] The aggada explicitly includes all people in the world as beneficiaries of this cosmicizing revelation; we have seen that God's voice is the agent of cosmicization here, and "His voice would go from one end of the world to the other."(Šir R. I,2,2) "The voice would come out and be divided into seventy voices in seventy languages, so that all the nations could hear."(SR 5.9)

God's voice is also related to the founding of a cosmos in two different versions of an interesting motif, both of which will be given here in full.

> [God's voice] came to them [i.e., Israel] from the south and they ran to the south to receive the voice, but from the south it was reversed and came to them from the north, so they ran to the north, but from the north it was reversed and came to them from the east; they ran to the east to receive the voice, but from the east it was reversed and came to them from the west . . . and from the west it was reversed and came to them from heaven, so they looked up to heaven, but it was reversed and came to them from the earth, so they looked to the earth. (Tan. Š'mot 25)

The people, who stand at the center of the cosmic directional points, hear the voice coming from each of the six points and therefore go to each of the six points in turn, in a sort of ritual procession.[25] Thus they describe with the movement of their bodies the perfect cosmos which is being founded in the act of revelation.

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[23] Cf. SR 24.4, cited in Chapter III, Part II, p. 129.

[24] PRE 97b, cited in Part III of this chapter, confirms that the dead are actually resurrected by God's revelatory word.

The second passage describes the movement of God's word, rather than of the people:

> The word would go out of God's mouth from His right side to the right side of Israel; then it would go around and surround the camp of Israel -- eighteen miles by eighteen[26] miles -- and then return from the right side of Israel to the right side of God, and God would receive it on His right and engrave it on the tablet."(40)

The moving word here performs the same function as the people in the previous passage: its movements trace the outline of a sacred cosmos. It travels along the axis between heaven and earth, from the right side of God to the right side of Israel,[27] Israel being at the center of the terrestrial cosmos. It then travels along the border between cosmos and chaos, finally returning to the sacred center and thence to God, at the center of the celestial cosmos. In sum, the act of revelation is accompanied by a ritual confirmation of the sacred cosmos in which the Israelites are said to live.

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[25] This description is strikingly similar to the ritualized movements made with the lulab, or ritual branch, on the holiday of Sukkot. Since the renewal of cosmic fertility is an important dimension of Sukkot, it is possible that this lulab ritual does symbolize cosmogony.

[26] In the numerology of the Hebrew language, eighteen means "life."

[27] In Rabbinic tradition the right side is the side of beneficence (cf. TB Soṭah 47a); in the later Kabbala the distinction between left and right became crucial, with the right symbolizing the good, blessing, and unity.

The Sinai aggadot carry out a pattern which we have seen in previous chapters: the time of cosmic renewal is also a time of spiritual renewal and rebirth for the Israelites on a personal level: "God said to them, 'I am making a renewal of things and renewing you.'"(41) Once again this theme of new beginnings is related to images of light and the dawn: "As soon as Israel went out of Egypt and received the Torah, the whole world was illuminated, as it is said, 'for the commandment is a candle and the Torah a light.'"(Tan. B IV,13) God's word is said to be the direct source of this light: "God would bring the word out of His mouth and it was divided into many lights."(42)[28] There are indications that this new appearance of light is expressed in the image of a dawn. The Israelites camped "'opposite the mountain' -- This means at the eastern side of the mountain."(Mek. Baḥodeš 1) God said to Israel: "Although you travel from north to south and south to north, always turn your faces to the east. -- This teaches that the presence of the Šekînah is in the east."(43)

According to the aggada, the Israelites were all sleeping as the dawn of the day of revelation arose: "Moses went out to the camp of Israel and awakened them from their sleep and said to them, "Arise from your sleep.'"(PRE 96b)[29]

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[28] This implies that the cosmogonic revelation causes a splintering of divine light. A similar theme, drawn from Gnostic myth, played an important role in later Judaism. Cf. Scholem, Major Trends, Ch. 7.

[29] The English translator completes this passage on the basis of a manuscript reading: "For behold God desires to give the Torah to you."

Eliade (MR, Ch. VII) points out that in many religious traditions, sleeping is symbolic of spiritual ignorance, while awakening symbolizes the attainment of true knowledge and redemption. Thus revelation means at once an end of darkness on the cosmic scale and an end of sleep on the personal level. One passage pertaining to the transformation of individuals to a higher spiritual level is particularly interesting in light of another motif studied by Eliade. The passage is as follows:

> Why was it called R'pîdîm? Because they loosened [Heb. *rîpu*] their hands from sin. "Through sloth the roof sinks in" -- "And God descended upon Mount Sinai on top of the mountain;" "And through indolence the house leaks" -- because they were indolent with respect to sinning, the house leaked. What is written? "The earth trembled and the heavens dripped, also the clouds dripped water." When did all this happen? On the day of the giving of the Torah."(50)

In this passage the cosmos is compared to a house, with the sky as the roof. The act of God's descending to the mountain is equivalent to breaking the roof. Now Eliade (SP, 172-179) shows that there is a widespread equivalence which he calls "body-house-cosmos;" each of these symbolizes an existential situation in which a man lives. The breaking of the roof symbolizes the breaking of that situation and the consequent possibility of attaining a higher spiritual level. Thus it is in keeping with this symbolism that the breaking of the roof in the aggada is done by God Himself, since it is God who allows the Israelites to achieve a higher spiritual status. And in this image the coincidence of breakthrough and transformation on the personal and cosmic levels is well ex-

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pressed.

But in this aggadic passage the theme is further developed. The breaking of the roof allows water to come through into the house, and this is paralleled by the cosmic situation of rain falling at the time of revelation. Thus the intrusion by God into the earthly dimension allows the fertilizing and life-giving rain to fall. This image is consonant with Eliade's point that the spiritual marriage of heaven and earth is always related to the rain which descends from heaven to fertilize earth. (PCR, 357) But let us repeat that rain, the source of earthly life, can only fall when the transcendence -- the break in spiritual level -- symbolized by the broken roof occurs. And this happens precisely at the moment of revelation. Thus the material abundance of the redeemed world is dependent of the new level of spirituality symbolized by God's immediate presence. Finally, this passage makes the central point that all of these phenomena occur only because the Israelites themselves have become lazy with respect to sin; i.e., they have ceased to sin and have instead followed the commands of God because of their faith in Him.

The theme of a new beginning on the personal level is also expressed in a motif which we have seen at some length previously. God asked for guarantors that Israel would keep the laws of the Torah, and He would only accept the children: "Immediately the Israelites brought their women with suckling infants at their breasts, and their women who were pregnant, and God made their wombs like glass and they [i.e., the embry-

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os] would speak with Him."(44)[30] But all of the Israelites are said to be reduced to the status of the infants who represent them before God:[31] "Why do they call Sinai 'my mother's house?' Because there they were like an infant one day old."(45) "'Your two breasts' -- These are Moses and Aaron . . . . Just as these breasts are full of milk, so Moses and Aaron fill Israel full of Torah."(Šir R. IV,5,1) Here the words of the Torah are compared to the breast milk which infants drink; but another passage seems to compare the words of the Torah to the breasts themselves: "'For your love [Heb. *dodayik*] is better than wine' -- The words of the Torah are all equal, one is like the other."(46) The English translator interprets this as a reference to breasts, seeing the Hebrew *dodayik* interpreted in the sense of the Hebrew *dadayik*, "your breasts" or "your nipples." Whether the words of Torah are compared to breasts or to the milk that flows from them, the general significance of the imagery is clear.

But another image is used more widely to describe the new personal status of the Israelites at Sinai -- the image of the bride. The aggada asks why God waited three

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[30] Cf. Chapter III, passage (51a) above.

[31] The aggada does not say why God would only accept the children as guarantors. Perhaps this is merely to intensify the idea that childhood is the symbolic status of all those who received the revelation. But TB Šabbat 32b says that Jewish children do die as punishment when their parents transgress the Torah. Thus the point may be that revelation is a test of faith in which one stands to lose one's child, somewhat as Abraham did. Cf. passage (70) below, which compares the revelation to the binding of Isaac, and Chapter III, passage (80) above, which compares the crossing of the Sea to the binding of Isaac.

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months after the Exodus to give the Torah, and it answers: "A captive proselyte woman who is freed may not be married nor engaged for three months."(PRK 12,p.216)[32] When Moses awakened the Israelites on the morning of revelation, he said: "The bridegroom has already come, and He seeks the bride in order to lead her under the bridal canopy, and He is waiting for her."(47) In the same passage Moses is called the best man who leads the bride to the groom. The revelation is described in the image of "a king who wanted to marry a fine and noble woman"(Šir R. I,2,3), and the aggada refers to the "Ten Commandments which they bound closely about them like the ornaments of a bride."(48)[33] The same imagery is used to describe the incident of the golden calf: "Shameless the bride who plays the whore under her own bridal canopy."(49)

The religious meaning of this marriage symbolism is rather complex. Eliade says:

> What must be emphasized is the cosmogonic structure of all these matrimonial rites: it is not merely a question of imitating an exemplary model, the hierogamy between heaven and earth; the principal consideration is the result of that hierogamy; i.e., the cosmic Creation . . . . The world is regenerated each time the hierogamy is imitated, i.e., each time the matrimonial union is accomplished.

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[32] This passage also indicates the relationship between the Exodus and Sinai. In the Exodus, God acted to transform radically the political status of Israel. In the desert, He acted to transform their spiritual status -- in a sense, they were proselytes. But all this was merely preparatory to the consummation of the "marriage;" at Sinai God comes in actual contact with the people and they enter into a permanent and exclusive relationship with Him.

[33] The translation here follows the published ET.

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(CH, 24, 26)[34]

In the aggadic context the marriage is indeed one between earthly spirituality and heavenly spirituality, and it is explicitly said to be the occasion of a renewal of creation. At the same time, the bride, like the infant, is starting a new life with a new status. However, just as the newly-born infant symbolizes a conjunction of actualization and potentiality, so the act of marriage is equally complex. According to Eliade, "Orgies usually correspond to some hierogamy. Unbounded sexual frenzy on earth corresponds to the union of the divine couple . . . . What was in isolation merges into the great womb of all things."(PCR, 356, 357)

Now we have seen that the orgy is a prime symbol of the reversion to chaos. Thus there appears to be a necessary connection between this form of chaos and the new creation brought about in marriage. Specifically, the bringing forth of a new life -- i.e., the child -- depends on the marital partners' previous reversion to chaos in the sex act.[35] It is just this reversion which makes the hierogamy a paradigm for the chaos of the orgy. Thus marriage too is a conjunction

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[34] To this passage should be added the passage from PCR, 357 cited above, which stresses the fertilizing rainfall as an integral part of the hierogamy motif.

[35] Note that the sexual implication here is within the context of a legitimate marital relationship; there is no hint of illicit sex. The orgy as described by Eliade is a reversion to chaos in two senses: it is a social chaos, in which all rules of marital fidelity are discarded, and it is a personal chaos in which the distinction between two individual partners is eliminated through sexual union. It is only the latter significance which seems applicable to the aggada.

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of potentiality and actualization. Now the aggada does not say specifically that the marriage consummated at Sinai has a sexual dimension. However, in general, marriage cannot be divorced from sexual relations in the Jewish tradition.[36] The use of the marriage image inevitably calls up connotations of the union of partners, as well as the creative act which arises from that union. In sum, we may say that the revelation at Sinai brings each Israelite to a new spiritual level because of his acceptance of God's word, but that this attainment is accompanied by a simultaneous experience of potentiality as well.

III

The image of marriage just discussed is in one sense paradigmatic of the aggadot on revelation in general -- the moment of supreme cosmicization is surrounded by many images of chaos. First we may consider the chaos in the natural realm. Appropriately, the physical setting for the revelation is apparently a thunderstorm, which, according to Eliade, is the natural model for the hierogamy of heaven and earth. "On the day of the giving of the Torah there were clouds and lightning and falling rain."(Mek. RS 142) When the Bible mentions lightning, it means "Lightnings upon lightnings and various kinds of lightning, each different from the other." (51)[37] The general description of the storm is related to

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[36] According to Mišnah Qiddušîn 1,1, sexual relations are equivalent to a legal marriage.

[37] This is a good example of a common aggadic tech-

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the idea of the seven divisions of heaven: "The voice of God came forth from out of seven compartments: from cloud, from misty darkness, from sparks, from lightning, from darkness, from thunder, from fire."(52) Here the various aspects of the thunderstorm -- chiefly forms of fire and darkness -- are combined by means of a common image of cosmic order, and thus the tone of the ambivalence of revelation (mixing images of cosmos and chaos) which we saw in the marriage imagery is continued.

In the preceding passage darkness is a principal motif; it is mentioned explicitly twice, and "'cloud' means nothing but extreme darkness"(Mek. RS 140), so in fact darkness is mentioned three times. The same idea is expressed in a more structured form: "'And Moses approached the misty darkness' -- inside of three compartments . . . . Darkness was on the outside, cloud in the middle, and misty darkness at the center."(53) Since the mountain top stands at the center of these three concentric rings of darkness, this is clearly an ordered cosmic structuring of symbols of chaos. The theme is further developed in relating darkness to God: "'And Moses approached the misty darkness' -- What caused him to do so? His humility . . . . Everyone who is humble ends up bringing the Šekînah down to dwell with man upon earth."(54) "When God gave the Torah to Israel, the angels were happy but God was sad, as it is said, 'When you heard the voice from out of

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nique -- When the aggadists have nothing essentially new to add to the Biblical description, they try to intensify the Biblical imagery through repetition and various means of emphasis.

the darkness.'"(PR 96a)[38] In both of these passages darkness is said to be either symbolic of or identified with God's presence, and yet we have seen enough of light and dark imagery to know that darkness is a symbol of chaos in the aggada.[39]

Earlier we noted that Mount Sinai is said to be like a furnace, and the presence of God is represented by fire, as the Torah is also said to be of fire. The symbolism of fire here, as in other cases, is complex and ambivalent. On the one hand, when the aggada says, "Israel was scorched by the heat of[40] the heavenly fire,"(55) and "The words of the Torah test men . . . . The commandments were only given in order to purify creatures,"(56) the intention is apparently that the fire of Torah destroys the element of sin and chaos in man; it is a sort of baptismal fire. The connection of this fire with chaos is apparent in the following: "God knew that Israel would only keep the commandments for forty days; therefore He spoke to them from the midst of fire and darkness."(57) Fire and darkness appear here as the proper response to Israel's chaos -- their lack of faith -- in the future. But we have also seen that the Israelites, because of their elevated spiritual state, were able to withstand this fire without injury. Thus the fire is both a means to gain this higher state and a sign that it has been attained; in the former sense it is destructive (although purifying), but in the latter sense it is not.

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[38] The meaning of the passage is that God was sad because He knew that the Israelites would not be able to keep the Torah and obey the commandments of God.

[39] The image of God's "dark countenance" appeared in Chapter V, Part I, in connection with the sending of quail. But there the darkness was a symbol of chaos because the people's request was "improper;" i.e., it showed a lack of faith and obedience.

[40] "By the heat of" (Heb. meḥamat) can also mean "by the anger of" or simply "because of." The idea of "anger," although probably not the primary meaning, would be inescapable to one who reads the Hebrew text.

Furthermore, the fire of Sinai and the Torah is said to have specifically cosmicizing functions as well: "The fire licked the firmament and then descended upon Mount Sinai and became a sort of signalling flame -- 'To make Your name known to Your enemies.'"(Mek. RS 143) The image here is strikingly similar to the Jerusalem of the future world, in which a pillar of fire serves as a sort of beacon light to the nations, who come to the flame and thus to the Messiah in Jerusalem. The ambivalence of fire, and its cosmic significance as a symbol of Torah, is set out in this antithesis: "All who accept the yoke of Torah,which is compared to fire, are freed from the yoke of the kingdoms who are compared to fire."(Mek. RS 144) In sum, fire, like the thunderstorm and darkness, seems to be symbolic of the conjunction of chaos and cosmos at the time of the revelation.

In addition to these specific phenomena, there is a general interruption of the natural order of the universe: "When God gave the Torah, no bird cried out, no fowl flew . . . . The sea did not move, men did not speak; but the world was noiseless and silent . . . .And the world was chaos [Heb.

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tohu v'bohu], as if there were no creature in the world." (SR 29.9) This passage is a striking description of a sort of suspension of time and reversion to the primal stillness which precedes creation. But there are other descriptions of chaos which take a different approach: "Moses came and made the lower things upper and the upper things lower, as it is said, 'Moses went up to God, and God descended to Mount Sinai.'"(DR X,2) Here the world still exists, but its order has been reversed as the heavenly and earthly dimensions meet.[41] Finally, there are descriptions of a universal chaos in which everything moves inordinately: "When the first voice went forth, both heaven and earth shook[42] from it and the seas and rivers fled; the mountains and hills were shaken and all the trees bent over."(58) "As soon as God began to speak, the entire universe trembled."[43](PH 41)[44]

Another aggada gives the reason for this shaking:

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[41] Cf. Chapter V, Part I, above for the same motif in connection with manna: bread came from heaven and dew from the earth.

[42] "Shook" is in Hebrew *raʿaš*; this word is used in particular to denote the action of earthquakes. Cf. Francis Brown, S [amuel] R [olles] , and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament . . .*(London: Clarendon Press, 1968; 1st. ed. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1891,1906), p. 950.

[43] "Trembled" (Heb. *hirʿîš*) is a causative form of the root *raʿaš*.

[44] Note that both total stillness and total, uncontrolled movement are employed as images of chaos in the aggada. The essential factor which unites all these images is the fundamental change in the existing order (the existing order being one of controlled movement). This change implies the potentiality for a new cosmic order or for a total absence of cosmos.

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"When God set about giving the Torah to Israel, the world began to totter and to melt, fearing lest -- God forbid -- Israel not accept the Torah and the world be turned back into chaos."(59) We have seen above that the revelation at Sinai is held to be a new founding of the world, but the emphasis here is on Israel's role in this process. It is not the act of God alone which determines that the cosmos will be reestablished: "God stipulated a condition to the order of creation and said to it, 'If Israel accepts the Torah, you will continue to exist, but if not, I will return you to chaos."(60) This passage helps to explain the nature of the new creation at Sinai; the world had not been destroyed in fact, but God had determined to destroy it if the Israelites refused the Torah. Thus God's giving and Israel's receiving the Torah saved the world from a threatened, rather than an actual, state of chaos. However, the various images of natural chaos which we have surveyed all appear to be incipient forms of the total reversion to chaos. Thus the Israelites must once again experience the imminence of total chaos; and their faith in God is once again the only thing that can save them (and the world): "The world would have already melted away and disappeared if Israel had not stood before Mount Sinai and said, 'All that God has spoken, we will do and we will obey."(61)

The threat to Israel and the world is all the more serious because the angels who descend on Sinai are perfectly prepared to carry out the threat: "They all descended keen

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on destroying the world if Israel would not accept the Torah." (62) Thus the same angels who form a protective cosmos around Israel are equally capable of destroying the universal cosmos, if the Israelites choose chaos over cosmos. However, perhaps paradoxically, the threatened chaos would affect heaven as well as earth; God says to the angels: "If Israel does not accept the Torah, there will be no dwelling place, neither for Me nor for you."(63) In a sense, the family of heaven needs the Israelites as much as the people need the divine forces, and the reaffirmation of cosmos is a joint venture of both. Although the Torah is a product of heaven, it must be embodied and lived by a people on earth in order to secure the foundation of the cosmos which encompasses both heaven and earth. But just as the Israelites had to see the Egyptians dying at the sea, so they have to experience all of the phenomena of chaos just described, in order to see the fate which they so narrowly avoided when they chose to accept the Torah -- the fate which would befall them should they forsake the Torah and choose chaos instead.

The reaction of the Israelites to this threat and responsibility is quite appropriate: "'And they positioned themselves' -- they huddled together. It teaches that they were afraid of the storms and the earthquakes and the thunder and lightning which came.:(64) "They did not stand in a holiday mood;[45] rather, they were in awe and agitated and

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[45] "Holiday mood" is in Hebrew *ʾalîraʾ*; the translation here follows the published ET. According to Jastrow, *Dictionary*, p. 73, the word is a metathesized version of the

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trembling."(65) "If the Israelites, who were well prepared, trembled before Mount Sinai, how much more so did the nations of the world?"(Mek. RS 142) The aggada accords Balaʿam the role of prophet to the nations, and

> when the Torah was given to Israel, all of the kings of the world trembled in their palaces . . . . They said to him, "Balaʿam, perhaps God will do to us what he did to the generation of the flood . . . perhaps He will not bring a flood of water, but He may bring a flood of fire." [Balaʿam] said to them, "He is not bringing a flood of water nor a flood of fire, but He is giving the Torah to His people."(Mek. Amalek 3)

This passage shows the equivalence of water and fire as sources of chaos, but more importantly it indicates the apparent parallel between the moment of revelation and the flood. Both of these acts of God appear, at the outset, to threaten the destruction of the world; whether that destruction will be carried out or not seems to depend on the response of the Israelites.[46]

However, the fate of the nations does not depend solely on Israel. The aggada holds the nations responsible for their own failure to accept the Torah, and so the theo-

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word *’ilarya’*, drawn from an identical Greek word (cf. English "hilarity"). But the metathesis may have a point to it; *’alîyra’* can be divided into the two Hebrew words *’al yira’*, meaning "without awe." The very next words in the text -- "rather they were in awe" -- stress this implicit meaning. Such an interpretation would link the experience of revelation with Otto's concept of the *numinous*; cf. Chapter IV, n. 24 above.

[46] Of course, there is a difference between Noah, whose faith has already been proven before the flood, and Israel, whose faith is being tested by the imminence of chaos. But the central factor common to both is that only the faith of an individual or group can save the world from destruction.

phany may be creative for Israel and yet destructive -- having the same results as the flood -- for the nations: "And as soon as the voice went out, each and every nation would hear the voice of God and it would expire[47]. . . . The voice would go out and murder the nations who did not accept the Torah."(66) The aggada insists, as noted above, that the message of the Torah was addressed to each of the seventy nations individually: "The voice would go out and be split into seven voices, and from seven voices into seventy languages so that all the nations would hear, and each and every nation heard the voice in the language of that nation, and they expired."(67) Thus, the death of the nations is held to be justified, and we see that the single act of God can have deadly as well as life-giving consequences, depending on the response of man.

But the creation of new life and new cosmos is by no means assured to the Israelites; until the last moment their fate hangs in the balance. It is striking that virtually all of the images of imminent death used here are also found in the Exodus aggadot: "God suspended the mountain like a bucket above Israel and said to them, 'If you accept the Torah, fine; but if you do not, your graves shall be there.'"(68) As a synonym for "bucket" (Heb. *gîgît*), Rashi offers the Hebrew *qupah*, the very word used to describe the

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[47] "Expire" means literally "its soul would go out;" cf. the same phrase applied to the Israelites at the Reed Sea and the discussion in Chapter III, n. 30 above. Here the phrase clearly implies death, since the parallel passage immediately following says that the voice "murdered" the nations.

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sea suspended over the heads of the Israelites as they passed through. This emphasizes the parallel between Exodus and Sinai as well as the fact that the waters of the sea did indeed threaten imminent death.[48] The same idea is expressed in another form: "'I awakened you under the apple tree' -- Mount Sinai was uprooted and positioned in the high heavens, and Israel was placed under it . . . God said, 'If you accept My Torah, fine; but if not, behold I shall press this mountain down upon you and kill you.'"(69) Here the mountain of revelation is pictured as an apple tree, symbolic of the fertility of a newly-created world (the Israelites plucked apples from trees in the paradise in the Reed Sea), yet at the same time it is poised to be an instrument of death; all depends on the response of the people.

In the Exodus aggadot Israel is compared to a dove in danger, and here too: "The mountain was uprooted from its place, and they approached and stood under it . . . . It is with reference to them that the tradition interprets the verse, 'My dove in the clefts of the rock.'"(Mek. Baḥodeš 3) Finally, we may note that at Sinai, as at the Exodus, the position of Israel is compared to that of Isaac bound on the altar: "[Sinai] was detached from Mount Moriah like the priest's portion from the dough, from the place where Isaac our father was bound. God said, 'Since Isaac their father was bound upon it, it is fitting for his children to receive the Torah upon it.'"(70)[49] Here again, the symbolism of Sinai as a sacred place, a source of Israel's proper faith relation with God, is juxtaposed with the symbolism of Sinai as a potential place of death.

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[48] It is interesting to note that the phrase "suspended the mountain over him like a bucket" is given in Alcalay's modern Hebrew-English dictionary as an idiomatic phrase meaning "to force a decision upon, to exert strong pressure on." Cf. Alcalay, Dictionary, p. 319.

But it is not only the mountain which may be the instrument of death. God Himself is pictured by the aggada as a military commander with a sword in His hand: "Like an heroic soldier who brandishes his weapon and shows its face to every side, thus, 'God spoke with you face to face.'"(71)[50] "The sword and the book [i.e., the Torah] descended from heaven bound together. [God] said to them, 'If you do what is written in this book, you will be saved from this sword, but if you don't do it, you will be murdered by this sword.'"(DR IV, 2) The important point here is that both alternatives laid before the people -- life and death -- are said to come directly from God. Another tradition seems to make the Torah itself the source of punishment to its transgressors: "The rabbis said that the Torah is a sword."(72)[51] Whether the

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[49] The parallel between the experience of Isaac, as interpreted by the aggada, and the experience of Israel at Sinai is quite close; Isaac is said to have actually died ("his soul went out") and then been revived by divine agencies and finally taken up into a heavenly paradise. Cf. Ginzberg, *Legends* I, pp. 281-286 and the sources *ad loc*. for details.

[50] The Biblical phrase "face to face" (Heb. *panîm b'panîm*) is taken by the aggada to mean that God showed more than one face; cf. passage (90) below.

[51] This passage may have arisen independently in its metaphoric sense: those who undertake to live the "life of Torah" are bound by the entire legal structure of Torah, which includes within it punishment for those who transgress its laws. Thus the "life of Torah" may be a blessing or a curse,

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Torah is the sword wielded by God or is merely bound to a sword, the people's experience of sword and book is simultaneous, and between these two they must choose.

Thus far we have seen the threat of chaos as a conditional one, which Israel may avoid by its faith. But there is an equally important tradition which makes Israel's response an irrelevant factor; this tradition centers on the mortal power of God's word: "If just one more word had been added [to the revelation] they all would have been dead."(Mek. RS 155) This danger of over-exposure to God's words is not confined only to Israel: "If it was written, 'The voice of God in its strength,' the world would not have been able to withstand it; but it says, 'The voice of God in strength' -- in the strength of each individual."(73) Like the manna, the word of God comes to each individual only in the amount he is capable of receiving without harm. But the danger inherent in God's word is different from that symbolized in the sword imagery: the latter is a punishment meted out by the will of God freely exercised against those who transgress the laws of the Torah, while the danger of God's word is something akin to the breaking of a tabu. That is, it is an impersonal force, powerful and dangerous because steeped in sacrality, and were it not miraculously tailored to each individual, it would "automatically" bring harm, regardless of the individu-

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depending on one's ability to live up to its demands. This meaning underlies the meaning of the concrete symbolism (the threatening sword) in the context of Sinai being discussed here.

al's obedience or lack thereof.[52]

This distinction is important, because the idea that the power of revelation was rendered harmless is a minority opinion in the aggada. Much more common is the view that the Israelites who experienced the full revelation of God's word actually did die:

> As soon as they came to Sinai and He was revealed to them, they expired[53] because He spoke with them.(74)
> And Israel, who were living, fell on their faces and died. (PRE, 97b)
> The word returned to God and said, "Master of the Universe, You are alive and enduring and Your Torah is alive and enduring, and You have sent me to the dead -- they are all dead."(Šir R. V,16,3)
> Moreover, when God began to speak, the upper elements and the lower elements shook, and Israel was unable to stand on their feet.(75)[54]
> On the day of the giving of the Torah, "the earth trembled;" immediately, all the living in the land of Israel died.(MT 68.5)

The following passage emphasizes that this death is an integral part of the immediate experience of God:

> And didn't God know that if He showed His glory to Israel and let them hear His voice, they wouldn't be able to stand it? But God foresaw that they would worship idols in the future, and He didn't want them to say: "If He had shown us His glory and His greatness and let us hear His voice, we wouldn't have worshipped idols."(SR 29.4)

This passage implies that God intended to release the killing power of His word upon Israel. It is essentially a defense of God's justice, claiming that the death is necessary because the people continue to have an element of faithlessness within them. However, it misses the true point of such an initiatory death (which makes a vindication of God's justice unnecessary): by raising the individual to a higher spiritual level and giving him a new "spiritual life," the experience of death eliminates the element of faithlessness.[55] Therefore, both those who would put their faith in God and those who would not must accept death from the divine source. There are other aggadot which make this point clear in several ways.

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[52] Cf. Eliade, PCR, 15-17, for an elaboration of the nature of tabu.

[53] Again, "expired" means literally "their souls burst out."

[54] This passage seems to link the chaos of nature at the moment of revelation to the death of the Israelites (if, as I take it, "unable to stand on their feet" is an image of death). In this view it is the effect of God's word on the cosmos, rather than the power of the word itself, which causes the people's death.

First we may note two negative statements:

> When Israel heard, "I am the Lord your God," the mastery of Torah was fixed in their hearts, and they would learn and not forget anything. They came to Moses and said, "Moses our master, act as an intermediary between us [i.e., between the people and God] . . . . What profit is there in our destruction?" They returned to the state of learning and forgetting. (76)

This passage is particularly interesting in light of Eliade's stress on the importance of memory (cf. MR, Ch. 7); remembering is equivalent to awakening and regaining the time of beginnings, while forgetting, analogous to sleep, is equivalent to being cut off from that "timeless time." Thus in this aggadic passage the acceptance of initiatory death appears as a means to attaining all that perfect memory symbolizes, while the escape from such death puts the people back in their normal human state of forgetfulness. The same passage con-

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[55] However, initiatory death does not guarantee that faithlessness will never reappear in the individual, as we shall see.

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tains a parallel aggada concerning the evil inclination; it is said to be rooted out at the moment of revelation,[56] but when the people demand Moses as an intermediary, it immediately returns into their hearts. Here again, the failure to accept initiatory death results in a failure to attain a higher spiritual status.

But the more common opinion of the aggada is that the Israelites did attain a new spiritual level: "At each and every word which came out of God's mouth the souls of Israel expired . . . . But if their souls expired at the first word, how did they receive the second word? [God] sent down the dew with which He will revive the dead in the future and He revived them."(77) This theme of the resurrection of Israel at Sinai is depicted in several ways. The dew is said to descend from heaven: "God said to the clouds of glory, 'Sprinkle dew upon My children'[57] . . . . And God sprinkled dew and rains upon them."(78) Here the idea that the source of life comes from the clouds leads to identifying it with rain, as also in the following: "Immediately God sprayed rains of life upon Israel."(MT 68.5)

Another opinion credits the Torah with saving the lives of Israel: "The Torah began to plead for mercy for Israel from God. It said to Him, 'Master of the universe, is there a king who would marry off his daughter[58] and murder his own children? The whole world is rejoicing because of me, and Your children are dead.' Immediately their souls returned."(79) Related to this last view is the opinion that the agent of resurrection is the spoken word of God, rather than its embodiment in the Torah: "A second voice went out and they came alive and stood on their feet."(PRE 97b) But this points up the ambivalence of initiatory death; the agent of death is also the agent of resurrection. Another passage describes the reviving word of God in curious detail: "God made His words sweet, saying to them, 'Are you not My children? I am the Lord your God, you are My people, you are beloved to Me.' And He began to coax them until their souls returned."(80)[59] Finally, the angels are depicted as God's emissaries who save the Israelites from death:[60] "God sent to each and every Israelite two angels -- one who put his hand over his [the Israelite's] heart so that his soul would not escape, and one who raised his head so that he would be able to see his Creator."(81)

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[56] On the spiritualizing significance of this "rooting out," cf. passage (14) above.

[57] Notice that the clouds of glory, which had been associated primarily with demarcating the boundaries of the sacred cosmos, are here depicted as the source of life-giving water. This again combines two central themes of the redeemed state.

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[58] The idea here is that the Torah is God's daughter; thus the marriage occurring at the revelation is taken to be a union of the Torah and Israel. This is a variant on the more common theme of the marriage of God and Israel at Sinai.

[59] This passage ascribes to the souls a surprising independence of God's will, which may indicate that even in their new status they retain their own free will; otherwise, they would not need to be coaxed.

[60] In the continuation of passage (80), the angels, too, are said to speak coaxingly to Israel, and to caress and kiss them as well.

Each of the various agents of resurrection mentioned here -- the dew and rain, the Torah, the word of God, the angels -- is symbolic of the spiritual realm of heaven. Furthermore, each participates in some way in the formation and preservation of the new, perfected cosmos following the revelation. The rain, as we saw earlier, is particularly connected with symbolisms of the marriage of heaven and earth and of the breaking of the roof as cosmicizing events, and here, too, a marriage is specifically mentioned in connection with the resurrection of Israel. The angels, too, were seen to play an important role in establishing the spiritualized perfect cosmos at Sinai. The role of Torah and word of God in this respect need not be reemphasized. In sum, the resurrection of the people, no matter how described, takes place by coming into contact with the forces of cosmicization and spiritualization, and the new life entered into is therefore marked by those two qualities in particular.

It is interesting to note that this symbolism of resurrection has been extended in the aggada to apply to those who had died previous to the time of revelation: "The first voice went out . . . and the dead in Š'’ol [hell] came alive and stood on their feet."(PRE 97b) But this is a complex passage, because it specifically says that the first voice, which brought death to the Israelites, brought life to the dead.[61] Thus the ambivalence of the moment of revelation is

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[61] This may be seen as a pre-figuring of the resur-

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heightened; all of the established order in the world appears to be overturned (the living die and the dead live), although reestablished when Israel accepts the Torah and with it a new order of spiritual life.

There are two aggadic themes which seem to symbolize this process of initiation at Sinai. The first describes a sort of ritual acting out of the death and rebirth of the people: "Israel stood before Mount Sinai. They drew back twelve miles and came forward twelve miles at each and every word.: (Tos. ᶜArakîn 1.10) A variant on this theme says that, "When Israel heard the word go out of God's mouth, they retreated twelve miles back and their souls expired."(82) The point at which they die is the turning point at which they stop retreating and begin to come forward to God again. Another text refers to this theme and interprets it:

> The generation of the desert were saintly people . . . . And Israel did not accept the Torah until [God] had exhausted them[62] . . . . How? Israel walked 240 miles[63] when they received the Torah[64]. . . . Therefore it is said, 'Happy are the upright[64] who walk in the Torah of God' --

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rection of the dead at the time of the future redemption. But nowhere in the descriptions of the future redemption is there a single act of God which simultaneously resurrects some of Israel and brings initiatory death to others. The two are always kept separate. Eliade (TO, 128-139) discusses the return of the dead as a central element in cosmic renewal in the eschatology of Melanesia. But there, too, the return of the dead seems to follow the various experiences of chaos, rather than being simultaneous as here.

[62] Cf. Chapter IV, passage (34) and n. 18 above, where the thirst brought upon Israel by God is said to be a "tiring out."

[63] Twelve miles back and twelve miles forward at each of the ten commandments equals 240 miles.

[64] "Upright" (Heb. *t'mîmeî* *derek*) means literally "the

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-- They received the Torah in spiritual perfection."(83) Apparently the purpose of their walking back and forth was to exhaust them in order to achieve this state of perfection. In other words, the imperfection within them seems to be exhausted by the back and forth movement, giving an image of a purification ritual entailing death to the former, impure condition.

Another description of this event ascribes a role to the angels: "Israel retreated back twelve miles and the ministering angels were leading them [Heb. *m'dadan*]."(84) According to the English translator of this text, *m'dadan* actually means "to lead step by step, like one leads a child who can hardly walk."[65] This reinforces the image we saw above of the Israelites at Mount Sinai as infants who have just begun a new life. Finally we may note a text which gives the same role to the angels, using the same verb, but then adds, "but not only the ministering angels -- even God Himself [was leading them]."(85) God is said to participate directly in the death and resurrection ritual of the Israelites.

The other theme concretizing the initiatory death at Sinai is that of baptismal purification: "Your fathers only entered into the covenant by means of circumcision, immersion,

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perfected of the path;" this phrase denotes both the means of initiation -- the path -- and the goal of initiation -- perfection.

[65] Jastrow, *Dictionary*, p. 280, interprets similarly; cf. especially his emended reading of Šir R. to 4,8, citing the same motif in the Exodus.

and sprinkling of blood."(TB K'rîtot 9a) The circumcision, as we saw, took place before the crossing of the sea and is an integral part of the initiatory death symbolism in that context. The immersion in water is derived by the aggada from the Biblical statement that the people washed their clothes before the day of revelation, and, "There is no washing of clothes mentioned in the Torah which does not entail the immersion of the people."(86)[66] We have already seen in connection with the crossing of the sea the initiatory significance of immersion in water.

However, before the Israelites may receive the revelation of the Torah, they must also undergo a baptism in blood; Moses sacrificed bulls as an offering to God,

> "And Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls;" -- This is God's half. "And he threw half of the blood upon the altar" -- This is the congregation's half. (Mek. Baḥodeš 3)
> [Moses asked God], "What shall we do with Your half?" He said to him, "Throw it on the people."(VR 6.5)
> As soon as he saw that they accepted [the Torah], he took the blood and threw it on the people . . . . He said to them, "Behold you are tied, bound, and knotted; tomorrow come and accept the commandments."(87)

Here the significance of blood baptism is partially explained; the people have been covered with the blood which rightfully belongs to God, and thus they have been inextricably tied to God. But the meaning of this baptism must be seen in light of the initiatory death motif. Like the sacrificial animal which is dead, covered with blood, and belongs to God, so the people are symbolically dead because covered with blood, and, since the blood belongs to God, the dead people in a sense are God's people. But the symbolic death results in a purification of past sins and the attainment of this new relationship with God. This new relationship is a form of atonement,[67] and according to the Talmud, "There is no atonement without blood [i.e., sacrifice of animals]."(TB Yoma' 5a) In this aggadic motif the people themselves are seen as the sacrificial animal, and it is their own death which raises them to the higher spiritual state represented by atonement. The blood, then, is simultaneously symbolic of death and of the immediate experience of God -- being tied or bound to God.[68] In sum, the attainment of a proper faith relationship with God, which ensures the stability of the newly-founded cosmos, seems necessarily linked to the experience of death brought about either by the act or the command of God Himself.

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[66] "Immersion" is in Hebrew t'bîlah; the word is used as a technical term to designate a ritual purificatory bathing and in modern Hebrew also designates the Christian ritual of baptism. In both senses it signifies the elimination of a state of separation from God and the consequent possibility of attaining a higher spiritual state.

The aggada itself contains several summary statements concerning the revelation at Sinai which express well the complex and ambivalent relationships of redemption and

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[67] "Atonement" (Heb. kapparah) means literally the act of covering over or patching up a separation, which is the literal meaning of the English as well. This motif stresses the Israelites' immediate experience of God; the distance between the two is eliminated in the act of revelation.

[68] "The image of an invisible rope or thread attaching man to higher regions has served to express . . . the possibility of being in communication with the Sky and Gods, and consequently of being chosen by the Gods and called to a religious vocation."(Eliade, TO, 187) But cf. TO, 160-188 and IS, 92-124 for discussions of the complexity of this "binding" symbolism.

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chaos: the word of God "was two-faced; it would go out and kill the nations who did not accept the Torah, but it would give life to Israel who accepted the Torah."(88) We have already seen this double effect of God's word, but the same passage goes on to note the further ambivalent effect upon Israel itself: "Israel heard it and was not harmed," to which the traditional commentary adds: "And this is so despite the fact that when they heard the words their souls expired." The aggada can thus say that even though the people died, they were not harmed; their death was in fact a source of life, but a new spiritual life which entailed death through the experience of God's word.

However, the judgment of the aggada is further complicated by the opinion that, "When God was revealed at Sinai, He gave reality[69] to the idols and they bowed down to Him." (89) This indicates that the false cosmic order based on the idols is not totally destroyed but rather is incorporated in some measure into the true cosmic order established at the time of revelation. The same idea is expressed in the following: "When the Torah was given to Israel, its voice went from one end of the world to the other and all of the idolatrous kings were seized with trembling in their palaces and they all sang a song."(TB Zebaḥîm 116a) As we saw in the Exodus aggadot, the singing of a song to God is equivalent to confessing faith in Him. Thus it appears that life is

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[69] "Reality" (Heb. *koaḥ*) means literally "strength;" cf. Chapter III, passage (98) for the same motif in the context of the Reed Sea.

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given to the nations as well as to Israel, although the dominant opinion of the aggada seems to be that the nations were killed by the revelatory word. But here, as in the case of the Israelites, there is no clear-cut distinction between the word of God as a source of life and the same word as a source of death.

This point is echoed in two passages describing God at the time of revelation: "God appeared to them at Sinai with many faces: with an angry face, with a repelling face, with a green face, with a joyous face, with a laughing face, with a kind and friendly face."(90) "'And God spoke all of these words' -- everything in the same instant. He kills and brings to life in the same instant. He smites and cures in the same instant . . . . Creates light and makes darkness, makes peace and creates evil, all of these in the same instant."(91) These passages make it clear that God is the source of opposite effects -- of cosmos and chaos -- simultaneously, because, as we have seen, God is above the differentiations which mark the human level of existence. And the aggadot concerning Sinai make it clear that the moment of God's manifestation on the earthly plane is the moment of the most extreme opposites being manifest.

Finally, we must note that once again this ambivalence is paralleled by an ambivalence within Israel. The aggada says:

> When Israel stood at Mount Sinai . . . . What is it comparable to? To a powerful [Heb. qašeh] snake-charmer who saw a fierce [Heb. qašeh] poisonous snake. He said, "Who can charm this snake?" Someone said to him, "And are you

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not the snake charmer? Everything depends on you."(92)[70] In this passage we may note first the fact that Israel, although raised to the highest spiritual level at Sinai, is compared to a poisonous snake, symbolic of death and chaos. Yet the same adjective is used to describe both Israel and God (the snake-charmer), indicating perhaps that each contains both cosmos and chaos. This idea is furthered by saying that God is the source of everything; He can bring the snake into the cosmic order by charming it, and yet He has created the snake and all that it symbolizes in the first place. This passage brings out in striking fashion the juxtaposition of God and Israel, both representing the coincidence of opposites, at Sinai. And, as we shall see immediately, the question of whether the snake can be charmed -- forced to eliminate the chaos within it -- is not really resolved.

The status of Israel is also summarized in a passage mentioned earlier in connection with the Exodus:

> "I am black but beautiful" . . . I am black at the sea . . . I am beautiful at the sea . . . I am black at Ḥoreb [i.e., Sinai], as it is said, "They made a calf at Ḥoreb," and I am beautiful at Ḥoreb, as it is said, "All that God has spoken, we will do and we will obey."(Šir R. I,5,1) "I am black but beautiful" -- In that in which I am black, in that I am beautiful.(93)

Passage (93) is a literal translation which attempts to show the aggadic view that Israel is a coincidence of the opposition between chaos -- faithlessness -- and the perfect cosmos

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[70] "Everything depends on you" (Heb. hakol mîmka) means literally "everything is from you." The literal sense speaks both to the idea of God as Creator of everything and to the idea of God as the only possible redeemer -- the only one who can charm the snake. Once again, a single symbolism unites the two acts of creation and redemption.

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of redemption -- faith in God. Both of these modalities of religious existence, according to the passage, are displayed in the same place, at the same time, in the same way. It is not a question of alternation; both coexist, and one can never overcome the other, just as no one aspect of God's existence can ever exclude any other. The opposites are held in constant tension, and the confusion which seems to result must be allowed to stand.

To end the exposition of the aggadot concerning past redemption at this point is to make an artificial distinction, for as the preceding passages show, the making of the calf is inextricably related to the acceptance of the Torah.[71] Only both acts together can show the true nature of the Israelite people. Having experienced both chaos and cosmos at the hands of God, and having been raised through this experience to new level of spiritual life, the people are still unable to eliminate totally the measure of chaos within them, and their potentiality for idolatry as well as for faith coexists with the actualized faith relationship which the revelation at Sinai symbolizes.

IV

The revelation at Sinai is the culmination of the

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[71] However, one must stop somewhere. I have chosen to take this study up to the moment at which Israel attains the perfection of redemption in the past, parallel to the state described in Chapter II. It is the relationship between this state and the chaos which precedes it that is the focus of the study. To go on and discuss the "golden calf" episode would take us into "post-redemption" history, the beginning of that "fallen" history which continues to this very day.

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single experience of redemption which began with the Exodus. Therefore, little in the way of new themes or ideas has been introduced in this chapter. However, the few new ideas and new emphases are important and should be commented on. In the first part of this chapter we saw two interrelated themes in particular, which are unique to the Sinai aggadot. First, God and His heavenly family of angels actually descend, meeting the earthly realm of the Israelites through the symbolic agency of the mountain. The symbolisms of ascension serve to emphasize the immediate contact between the heavenly and the earthly. Second, as a consequence of this meeting, the people are depicted as almost totally spiritualized. There is little mention of the material aspects of their paradise (although we are not allowed to forget that they are experiencing God's presence in concreto). The close contact between the people and the angels leads to an image of the two as intermingled, so we are not surprised when the aggada says that the people attained the status of angels. This spiritualization represents the attainment of a new level of religious existence, paralleled on the cosmic scale by the new founding of the cosmos at the time of revelation. Thus it is the goal toward which all of the experience of redemption has been leading -- the perfect meeting of spiritual perfection and material paradise. And, to repeat, this experience can only come about because of the immediate presence and full revelation of God.

However, the third particular emphasis of this chapter must be discussed in light of the foregoing two. This chapter gives us perhaps the most intense and widespread conjunction between chaos and cosmos of any of the aggadot studied here. There is hardly any aspect of God's self-revelation which does not entail some measure of chaos. In particular, the experiences of symbolic death and the imminence of death seen previously culminate, in this chapter, in the actual death of the Israelites. And this death is explicitly said to be caused by the experience of the full revelation of God. To understand the significance of chaos here, it will be instructive to compare the Exodus and Sinai aggadot in this respect.

In the case of the Exodus, two principal explanations were given for the experience of chaos. First, the imminence of death is an initiatory ordeal; only those who can maintain their faith in the face of total dissolution are saved. In this respect the Sinai experience is parallel to the Exodus. God threatens both the cosmos and Israel with destruction if the people do not respond with true faith by accepting the Torah. And in fact, the nations, like Egypt at the Exodus, are destroyed because of their lack of faith; while those who survive the ordeal find themselves in a new and more intense relationship with God. But the Exodus aggadot show that this type of chaos does not necessarily entail the immediate presence and revelation of God: although God is said to be present at the sea, it is a minor motif whose consequences are not developed, and all of the chaos of the Exodus is theoretically possible without the self-revelation of God.

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The second explanation of chaos at the Exodus is that chaos is potentiality, in this case the potentiality for further development of the faith relationship with God. However, this explanation does not seem applicable to the Sinai situation, for here no further development is possible; the perfection of the redeemed state has been achieved. If the Israelites could maintain the perfection of the moment of revelation following their resurrection, nothing else would ever happen on the stage of history. This point is emphasized by the many parallels between Sinai and the future redeemed world, and those parallels explain a small amount of the potentiality at Sinai; i.e., just as in the future world, a small experience of potentiality still remains amidst the perfection of cosmos.

The discussion thus far has yielded two explanations of the significance of chaos at Sinai: it serves as an initiatory threat and it gives the small traces of potentiality found in every paradisal state. But neither of these explains the actual death of the people, which is the unique factor in this chapter. However, we have also seen that the immediate presence and full revelation of God is the chief difference between the Exodus and Sinai situations. This reinforces the conclusion that God's self-revelation is the key to understanding the particular message of the Sinai aggadot. The point to be emphasized is that the immediate presence of God seems to explain both the perfection of the redeemed state and the fact that the people actually die, while the parallels drawn from the Exodus aggadot can explain neither of these. The

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present chapter is a culmination of both the cosmos and the chaos experiences studied in previous chapters, and in both cases the distinctive feature and cause of the culmination is the actual presence of God.

This brings us back to the central conclusion of Chapter Four: the experience of God is the experience of the transcendence of all opposites. Therefore, the more immediate and intense the experience of God, the more drastically will the opposites of cosmos and chaos be manifest simultaneously. Before the revelation at Sinai, the people had only experienced the acts of God; God had sent them chaos as well as cosmos, in an initiatory ordeal, and those with faith were able to survive. Here, however, it is God Himself who is manifest, and the question of faith does not arise. The mere presence of God is enough to cause death to even the most faithful, because that presence makes manifest the extreme instance of chaos. On the other hand, it also manifests the extreme of cosmos and redemption, symbolized here by the virtually simultaneous resurrection of the people through agencies representing pure spirituality and perfect cosmos.

The aggada seems to say that the essence of the Sinai experience is the revelation of God himself; the Torah, because it is the archetype of perfect cosmos, is only a partial experience of totality, and thus the revelation of Torah is secondary. Yet, in the end, God withdraws, leaving the Torah as His permanent revelation on earth. So we have the culmination of all the initiatory experiences studied so far.

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The people must experience the fullness of chaos, but immediately they are given the perfection of cosmos and it is this latter which is their permanent state (a state symbolized by the possession of the Torah). However, to repeat, that state could not be reached without the two-sided experience of God's presence, because no state of spiritual perfection is possible without God's presence, a presence which necessarily brings chaos with it.

In conclusion, it appears that the pervasive conjunction of cosmos and chaos in this chapter is to be explained by the pervasive and immediate presence of God. And the result is that the Israelites, having experienced this conjunction of opposites to its full extent within themselves, are raised to that spiritual level where the opposites are eternally reconciled -- where perfect cosmos exists because it has accepted the reality of chaos and experienced chaos fully. Yet in the end, even the ultimate initiatory experience can not make the redeemed state permanent. The people quickly fall back to their former ambivalent state, resembling the divine in that they contain the possibility for both chaos and cosmos, but being merely human in that they are forced to choose between the two. And the symbol of their humanity is their choice of the chaos of the golden calf.

CONCLUSION

I

Having studied the relationship of redemption and chaos in the separate sets of legends, we must now look at the process of past redemption as a whole. In doing so, one fact is striking: the process is not described as a single reversion to total chaos followed by a single cosmogony resulting in a paradisal state. Such a process could have been elaborated out of the Biblical materials. It would have been easy enough to describe the passage through the sea as complete chaos, the wandering in the desert as a cosmogony, and the revelation at Sinai as an unalloyed paradise. The fact that the aggada does not take this course indicates that it has a different view about the nature of the redemptive process. And, indeed, that different view is quite apparent in reviewing the material studied here.

The course chosen by the aggadists is to conceive the experience of chaos and the experience of paradise as two parallel, interrelated, and simultaneous developments. That is, throughout the preceding chapters there is an increasingly perfected experience of paradise and, parallel to it, an increasingly total experience of chaos. Both of these processes are said to be acts of God, and both culminate in the actual presence of God at Sinai. Thus both appear to be simultaneous aspects of the experience of the one God in redemption. This

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makes it clear that the aggadists held the experience of chaos to be simultaneous with the experience of absolute reality; in fact, as we have seen, the experience of chaos is said to be an aspect of the experience of absolute reality. We must now examine the implications of this conclusion.

II

To posit an intrinsic relationship between chaos and absolute reality is to reject a form of dualism which conceives chaos to be an independent power over against absolute reality. This rejection, in turn, implies that there can never be an experience of chaos alone, apart from the experience of absolute reality. And in fact, we have seen that at no time do the Israelites experience only chaos. Even their actual death at Sinai is immediately followed by resurrection. They are never prey to an independent power of chaos which totally eliminates their actual existence. But the enemies of Israel are in fact totally "dissolved." This permanent reversion to chaos, however, is caused by an act of God, and thus in its own way, it is an experience of God. The difference, as we saw, the factor which keeps Israel from being "dissolved" like their enemies, is their faith.

Now this faith is precisely the confidence that God will not allow His people to remain in chaos. It is the dependence on God to bring about a new creation, a new and better situation for Israel. In other words, it is the faith that the experience of absolute reality as the _coincidentia oppositorum_ will not only dissolve the old "world" of the

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people, but will also lead to the creation of a new, paradisal world. And precisely because of this faith God does redeem the people; i.e., He creates a new existence both on the cosmic and on the personal level for the Israelites. We see here that the distinction between chaos and cosmos is central in the understanding of the significance of faith -- faith brings about a new cosmos because faith is the assurance that a new cosmos will rise out of chaos. This new and paradisal cosmos is in evidence throughout the process of redemption. Even in the midst of chaos, it provides a new and increasingly spiritual milieu for the people. But the final and most convincing justification of their faith is the paradise attained after their death at Sinai. For this is a permanent paradisal cosmos which puts an end to the experience of chaos and death -- if the people choose it.

In sum, we find that for the aggada, the experience of coincidentia oppositorum in chaos is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a means to the new cosmogony and initiatory rebirth which results in a perfected cosmos and the negation of the power of chaos. Thus the experience of absolute reality is both an experience of the coincidence of cosmos and chaos and at the same time an experience of the victory of cosmos over chaos. It may appear that the aggada is really no more consistent here than Eliade. That is, the aggada, like Eliade, posits chaos as both coincident with and opposed to cosmos. The difference, however, is that for the aggada, the opposition of chaos and cosmos does not imply a distinction between chaos and absolute reality. The evidence for

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this conclusion is the constant and unrelieved conjunction of chaos and absolute reality in the process of redemption. Thus the opposition between chaos and cosmos is actually an opposition between two aspects of man's experience of God. As a result, it seems that the experience of absolute reality is one in which chaos and cosmos are opposed, yet reconciled simultaneously. There does seem to be a contradiction here.

Perhaps we have once again the distinction between the divine and human "viewpoints." That is, perhaps we can solve the problem by positing that absolute reality in itself is a coincidence of opposites, while man inevitably sees these opposites as irreconcilable. However, this solution cannot be accepted as applicable to the aggada, because in the aggada it is God Himself who brings about the establishment of cosmos and negation of chaos. Although God contains the power of chaos within Himself, He is nevertheless ultimately using chaos in the process of redemption to secure a perfect cosmos both for the Israelites and for Himself. We have seen that the cosmogony of redemption establishes the kingship of God; thus it involves a new situation for God Himself, a situation of perfected cosmos. Throughout the aggada it is clear that God is seeking to found this new cosmos and to assert thereby the primacy of cosmos over chaos. This means that the ambivalent role of chaos -- which is opposed to and yet united with cosmos -- is not merely a function of human limitation. Rather it is absolutized by being rooted in the very nature of God. The distinction between chaos and cosmos and

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the transcendence of that distinction in pure unity are both held to be absolute simultaneously.

III

It would appear that the aggada posits a fundamental ambivalence in absolute reality itself. Absolute reality reconciles cosmos and chaos, yet it works ultimately for the redemption of man, the world, and itself through the victory of cosmos over chaos. But this understanding of absolute reality reflects a deeper ambivalence which is not peculiar to the aggada. In many religious traditions we find the expression of a fundamental ambivalence of human existence. Man needs a world in which to situate himself, a world of ordered forms which allows him to insure his own continued existence by continuing its existence. Man seeks existence, rather than non-existence; he seeks to live in a world which is founded in every sense of that word. The aspiration to ultimate actualization -- the exhaustion of all potentiality -- is a human tendency which arises out of this need for a secure and enduring world and life. On the other hand, religious man experiences absolute reality as a *coincidentia oppositorum* which transcends the oppositions and limitations imposed upon all human life. He sees reflected in the sacred all that he is not, and he aspires to realize in himself this transcendence of limitations, sometimes even at the price of losing his own existence.

This ambivalence presents man with a fundamental contradiction. If the world is to be truly and permanently

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founded, the power of potentiality must be negated. But if that occurs, then the world is forever limited and bound to the particular forms which have already been created; no further change is possible. Just as potentiality feeds upon itself in the aggada, being used to create even more potentiality, so would actuality tend to increase actualization, until nothing more can possibly happen. In one sense, man aspires to such a situation of perfect stasis; but nevertheless he knows that it imposes the ultimate limitation upon him. Therefore, he knows that in choosing cosmos over chaos he is threatened with the loss of that transcendence of limits to which he aspires simultaneously.

Thus, the aspiration to perfect cosmos and the aspiration to the coincidence of opposites each place a limitation upon the other, because either one would be a negation of one central dynamic of human existence. The aggadists appear to have understood this problem, and to have understood as well the radical solution to which it inevitably leads. That solution -- which is embodied in the aggada -- is the perception that the true coincidence of opposites must reconcile this ultimate opposition as well. Neither a harmonious unity of cosmos and chaos nor an opposition between cosmos and chaos can in itself be the ultimate reality. That reality which is absolute for man must contain and reconcile this fundamental opposition in human life. God represents the true _coincidentia oppositorum_, for He accepts the fact that He must go beyond the coincidence of chaos and cosmos to found a fully actualized -- redeemed -- world. The aggada teaches that in the encounter with God, man too must go beyond the unity of opposites to an acceptance of a differentiated world of actualized forms. Paradoxically, only the person who seeks more than the static coincidence of opposites can experience the true coincidence of opposites. Thus this true coincidence and the perfected paradisal cosmos are not at all opposed to each other; in reality each is logically necessary for the other.

The task of man is to embrace both total unity and the world of forms simultaneously; this task is symbolized by the revelation of God at Sinai. In the initiatory death at Sinai the people experience the union of chaos and cosmos at its most extreme, while the same act of revelation founds a world on the cosmic scale. And all of this leads to a perfect paradisal state which is the symbol for the true *coincidentia oppositorum* which accepts the necessity of actualized existence and separate forms. A correlate of this necessity is the eternal separation of God and man. Although raised to the status of the angels, and impelled by a drive toward realizing absolute reality in his own being, man must stop short of union with God. The redeemed state demands the actualized existence of individuals as separate forms, not their dissolution in God. The true state of religious perfection for man is the *imitatio Dei*, in which the distinction between God and man secures for man the true experience of *coincidentia oppositorum*, which is God.

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IV

In the end, then, the experience of chaos in the aggada is indeed ambivalent. The experience of absolute reality in itself demands the fullest experience of pure potentiality, but at the same time it demands the experience of the overcoming of all potentiality. Because absolute reality tends toward perfect cosmos, it is constantly using the potentiality within itself to overcome potentiality in the act of new creation. When the force of potentiality is completely negated, there will be an eternally fixed order of creation, and it is this order -- the redeemed world of the future -- which is the religious goal and hope of the aggada. Yet, potentiality is most definitely a modality of absolute reality which man must experience fully if he is to gain a true experience of God. This experience of potentiality cannot be forgotten by man, no matter how close he comes to the perfect cosmos of the redeemed state; only because he carries the traces of potentiality within him can a man be said to have attained redemption. This remembrance is symbolized in the traces of potentiality which remain in the paradisal state.

The necessary experience of chaos and the memory of it have one more profound consequence which must be discussed. The absolute reality which the aggada posits is highly paradoxical. Incorporating both chaos and cosmos, there is no obvious reason why it should necessarily eliminate chaos and affirm cosmos. Yet it does. The experience of chaos as a part of absolute reality reaffirms that reality is paradoxical, and it raises in man's mind the more logical possibility: should absolute reality not remain eternally balanced between the cosmos and chaos which it incorporates? The persistent memory of chaos keeps this question alive in man's mind. Moreover, it raises another question which also remains: is it not possible that absolute reality could have been such that it implied absolute chaos -- pure potentiality -- rather than perfect cosmos as its end? That is certainly a conceivable possibility, and the experience of chaos as an act of God must reinforce such thoughts. What would be the meaning of a universe which tended ever toward disorder and non-existence? And what disastrous consequences would the experience of chaos in such a universe have for man?

As these questions arise in the mind, the response of the aggada is faith. Faith in God, ultimately, must mean trust that the absolute reality which founds the world is ever producing order rather than disorder, and life rather than death. Only such a faith can redeem the man who faces the chaos which God brings to him. One who trusts in an order founded by a god other than God -- an order not based on the true coincidence of opposites -- can not survive the ordeal of God's chaos. Neither can one survive who experiences the _coincidentia_ _oppositorum_ without the assurance of order. Yet, faith is difficult, because the experience of God is inextricably tied to the experience of chaos. And the nature of absolute reality is patently paradoxical and hard for man to accept. Therefore, in the end, the Israelites who have been

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raised to the level of the true coincidence of opposites turn away, fearing the very power of the paradoxical reality they have experienced. They turn to the limited but understandable order created by man himself, a cosmos founded on a golden calf. But in this act they are turning away from perfect cosmos and insuring that they will once again have to experience the power of chaos. The final message of the aggada, then, is this: man does fear the experience of chaos. Yet, man only escapes from chaos by experiencing it in its fullness, while maintaining his faith that absolute reality is redemptive -- that God is always using chaos to overcome chaos and create a perfect redeemed cosmos.

APPENDICES: HEBREW TEXTS

"Appendix -- Chapter 2"

1. הארץ עתידה להיות נזרעת ועושה פירות בן יומה...בו ביום שהיה
נזרעת בו ביום עושה פירות.

Sifra B'ḥuqotaî

2. עושה האילנות לתן פירותיהם בכל חדש וחדש.

SR 15.21

3. עתידה חטה שתהא כשתי כליות של שור הגדול.

TB Ketubot 111b

4. כל גפן וגפן לימות המשיח אינה פחותה מעיר אחת לבצרה.

PM 343

5. והארץ שהקב"ה עתיד לחדש תוציא אילנות וכל מיני מגדים (אבן
שמואל: האדמה בכל העולם כולו).

MG 98

6. וכל אילן סרק שלא נשא פרי מעולם הוא נושא פירות אז משוי שתי
אתונות.

PM 343

7. יהיו חטים שפות זו בזו ונושרות סולתן בארץ ואתה בא ונוטל
מלא פיסת זו של יד כדי פרנסתך.

Sifre D'barîm 315

8. עתידים כל אחד מיש׳ מולידים בנים בכל יום - קל וחומר
מתרנגלת.

PM 343

9. לעתיד לבא אין לך כל אחד ואחד שאין הווין לו בנים כיוצאי
מצרים.

Mek.RS 139

10. לעתיד לבא אני נוטע אותם נטע אמת שלא ינתשו מעל אדמתם.

PRE 100b

11. עתידין צדיקים שמבצבצים ועולין בירושלים שנא׳ ויציצו מעיר
כעשב הארץ.

TB Ketubot 111b

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12. (ה׳) הראה לו המקום ג"ע...הראה לו המקום גיהנם סמוכה לה.

M.Tannaim II,224

13. (ה׳) גוזר על כל צדיקים ורשעים והם עולים לירושלים וג"ע
זה הוא דרך לשתיהן...כיון שהגיעו לשם הקב"ה מכניס הצדיקים
לג"ע ומעות דרכן של הרשעים ומוליכן בדרך לגיהנם.

MT 146.9

14. כשם שהרקיע עשוי שורות שורות של כוכבים כך ג"ע עשויה
שורות שורות של צדיקים והן מאירין בה ככוכבים.

MHG 2,8

15. מעין אחד של מים חיים יוצא מתחת עץ החיים ונחלק לארבעה
חלקים...וכולם סובבים הג"ע מתחילתו ועד סופו.

K'tapuaḥ 284

16. יש בג"ע שמונים רבוא של מיני אילנות בכל זוית, הקטן שבהם
משובח מכל עצי בשמים.

SGE I,52

17. מצא גפן שגורשה ויצאה מג"ע ואשכלותיה עמה...ונטע ממנה
כרם בארץ בו ביום נשתגשגו פירותיה.

PRE 54b

18. כשם שגלגל חמה נתון באמצע הרקיע כך עץ החיים נתון באמצע
ג"ע.

SGE II,139

19. והאילן הזה הוא שרשיו בלבנון שהם כסא הכבוד...ושרשיו
שבעים ושתים שרשים שתולים בבית ה׳ והענפים ארבעים ושתים
וכל שרי עולם תלויים בו.

SGE II,139

20. כל מי בראשית מתפלגין תחתיו.

BR 15.6

21. עץ שהוא פוסה על כל החיים.

BR 15.6

22. עתיד הקב"ה להוציא נחל מבית קדשי הקדשים ועליו כל מיני
מגדים.

TB San. 100a

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23. כל מי בראשית עתידין להיות יוצאין כמין פי הפך.

Tos. Sukkah 3.10

23A. ויוצאין ונעשין לי"ב נחלים כנגד י"ב שבטים.

PRE 124a

24. וכל שדה וכרם שאינן עושין פירות משקין אותם באותם המים והם
עושין פירות.

PRE 124b

25. מה נאים הרי א"י מושכים חלב ודבש כנחלי מים שוטפים וגם
נהרי יין.

PM 339

26. ארבע נהרות נמשכין ויוצאין מג"ע, אחד של יין ואחד של דבש
ואחד של חלב ואחד של אפרסמון.

Agg. Šir 83

27. מתגאין למעלה מהנחל עד שלא יכל אדם לעבור כי גאו המים.

PRE 124b

28. עולם זה דומה לים ועולם שבאת ממנו דומה ליבשה...ועוד עולם
הזה דומה למדבר והעולם שבאת ממנו דומה ליישוב.

Ruth R. 3.3

29. ארבעה כוסות ישועה משקה ליש׳.

MT 11.5

30. בשעה שהקב"ה נכנס בג"ע עם הצדיקים עץ החיים נותן ריח
ואותו הריח סובב כל הגן ואותו הריח הוא חיים לכל
הצדיקים אשר שם.

SGE II,138

31. בשעה שבנה שלמה את בית המקדש נתמלא כל העולם ריח בשמים.

PR 96b

32. הצדיקים לעתיד לבא אינן צריכין לא אפרסמון ולא כל מיני
בשמים, רוח צפון מכבדתו וזוחלת לפניהם כל בוסמני ג"ע.

Agg. Šir 4,16

33. ואלמלא מכניס ראשו לג"ע אין כל בריאה יכולה לעמוד בריחו.
TB B.B. 75a

33A. משחקים בכל יום בג"ע לפני הבורא.

MK 26

34. ׳להגיד בבקר חסדך׳ לכל באי העוה"ב שהוא דומה לבקר ׳ואמונתך
בלילות׳ לכל באי העוה"ז שהוא דומה ללילה.

PRE 44b

35. ואף ירושלים לעתיד לבא כל בקר ובקר דינה יוציא לאור.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 1

36. שש מראות נוגה סובבות אותו והנוגה השישית הוא כמין נהר
ויוצא ונכנס לתוך הגן.
SGE II,138

37. וכל חופה וחופה למעלה ממנה גפן של זהב ושלשים מרגליות
תלויים בו וכל אחד מבהיק זיו כזיו הנוגה.

SGE I,52

38. החומה השלישית היא מאור מעורב בחושך.

SGE II,133

39. ברקים של אש יוצאים מפיהם וקרני הוד בראשם וזיום מבהיק
מסוף העולם ועד סופו.
Seʿudat Lev. 151

40. איני מצריך לכם לראות באורה של חמה אלא בכבודי אני מאיר
לכם.
Y 719

41. האור ההוא גדול מן אור השמש והירח שהוא מכהה את שניהם.
Hai Gaon 140

42. ולעתיד לבא וחפרה הלבנה ובושה החמה מרב נגהם של צדיקים.

Rashi on TB San. 91b

43. כל המשתמש באור התורה, אור התורה מחייהו.

TB Ketubot 111b

.44 בשביעי מה הוא אומר? 'מזמור שיר ליום השבת' - יום שכולו שבת...צדיקים יושבין ועטרותיהן בראשיהן ונזונין מזיו השכינה.

ARN I,1

.45 אמרו יש' לפני הקב"ה: רבש"ע ממה שאתה מביא אורה לעולם שמך מתגדל בעולם. ומה היא האורה? - גאולה.

Šir R., I,3,3

.46 כל צבאות השמים...לעתיד לבא הקב"ה מחדש אותן ומוסיף על אורן אור שבעתים.

PRE 123b

.47 לעתיד לבא החמה והלבנה בושים והככבים אין להם בושה.

PR 45a

.48 גבורתם של יש' כגבורת החמה שאין אדם יכל להביט בה.

PM 333

.49 'תזרח שמש יאספון' כשתזרח שמשו של משיח יאספון אוה'ע.

MT 104.18

.50 אין גיהנם לעוה"ב אלא הקב"ה מוציא חמה מנרתיקה, צדיקים מתרפאין בה ורשעים נדונין בה.

TB Nedarim 8b

.51 ואפילו אדם חולה הקב"ה גוזר לשמש ומרפאו.

SR 15.21

.52 יהיו תלויים בירושלים שבעים ושתים מרגוליות שהן מבהיקות מסוף העולם ועד סופו ואוה'ע ילכו לאותה אורה.

Vayoša῾ 56

.53 עתידין חחומי ירושלים להיות מליאים אבנים טובות ומרגוליות וכל יש' באין ונוטלין חפציהן מהם.

(מנדלבוים: ובכ"י 'מליאים' חסר)

PRK 18

.54 בית המקדש בנוי ארבעה זהבים: זהב מזוקק וזהב צרוף וזהב שחוט וזהב פרום - זהב שהוא עושה פרות.

PM 340

XUM

55. אף בית המקדש הצורות שהיו בקירותיו של זהב, שהיו מצוירין שם כל מיני אילנות, היו עושה פרות.

BaR. 11.3

56. מיוסד בספיר מקובע בבדלח.

PM 340

57. אין זה דומה לזה ויש מהם כסאות של כסף ויש מהם של מרגוליות.

K'tapuaḥ 284

58. שלש חומות יש לו לג"ע וכלן של אש.

SGE I,52

59. ׳ואני אהיה לה נאם ה׳ חומת אש סביב׳ כך אמר הקב"ה אני וכל פמליא של נעשים לה חומה לירושלים לעתיד לבא.

PR 160b

60. ובעתים ההם בהגלות המקדש וירושלים תרד שכינה מן השמים ותתיצב כעמוד אש מן הארץ ועד הרקיע.

Hai Gaon 140

61. בעוה"ז יש׳ דבקים להקב"ה...אבל לעתיד לבא הם הוויים ודומים מה הקב"ה אש אכלה אש...אף הם הוויים אש אכלה.

PR 46b

62. לעתיד לבא צדיקים מהלכים באש כאדם שהוא מהלך בחמה ביום הצינה והיא עריבה עליו.

PR 160b

63. חפת אש מנין? שעתידה אש לצאת מחופתן של צדיקים ורשעים נכוים בה.

PM 343

64. חפת להבה שמלהטת הרשעים מנין? שנא׳ קול ה׳ חוצב להבות אש.

PM 344

65. ואש בחופה למה? מלמד שכל אחד ואחד נכוה מחופתו של חבריו (פירש"י: נכוה חופתו של קטן מחופתו של חבריו הגדול ממנו).

TB B.B. 75a

XUM

66. וכן אתה מוצא לעוה"ב שהקב"ה מרחיב את ירושלים...עד שעולה לשמים...הקב"ה מעלה מן השמים לרקיע ומן השני לשלישי ומן שלישי לרביעי וגו׳...עד שמגעת לכסא הכבוד.

Tan.B III,20

67. ותרד ירושלים בנויה ומשכללת מן השמים.

NRSY 196

68. והיא יושבת בראש שלשים ושלשה צלעות ובית מקדש בראש כולם.

PM 340

69. וההיכל בנוי על חמשה ראשי הרים.

SZ 85

70. הררי אל על תהום רבה.

BR 33.1

71. היה כל העולם כולו מישור וערבה ונעשה הרים וטרשיים וגימיות ועתיד לעתיד לבא לחזר למישור.

Y 47

72. המלך העשירי תוזרת המלוכה לבעלה מי שהיה המלך הראשון הוא מלך האחרון.

PRE 29a

73. כל כסא וכסא ששים מלאכי השרת משמשים אותו.

K'tapuaḥ 284

74. בני מיום שבראתי את עולמי לא הייתי מונע מכם אלא כסא הכבוד...ועכשיו אני מנחיל אתכם מכסא הכבוד.

Seʿudat Lev. 150

75. ועלה דוד לבית המקדש שברקיע ושם מוכן לו כסא של אש שהוא ארבעים פרסאות גבה וארכו כפלים ורחבו כפלים.

MG 90

76. עתידה ירושלים להעשות מטרפולין לכל המדינות ולהמשיך כנהר אליה לכבודה.

Šir R. I,5,3

XUM

77. וצדיקים הנשארים בציון וחסידים הנותרים בה עתיד הקב"ה להושיב כל אחד ואחד על כסא כבוד.

MG 349

78. עתידה ירושלים שתהא מגעת עד שערי דמשק.

Šir R. VII,5,3

79. ובית המקדש יהא רחב עד דמשק.

PM 340

80. עתידה ירושלים להיות כא"י וא"י ככל העולם כולו.

PR 2a

81. לרחב מנין? ת"ל ׳ממגדל חננאל עד יקבי המלך׳...עד היקבין שייקבן ממה הקב"ה (מתנות כהונה: והוא ים אוקינוס).

Šir R. VII,5,1

82. בית המדרש של הקב"ה לעוה"ב הוה שמונה עשר אלף רבבות פרסאות.

PM 341

83. יש׳ יושבים לפני הקב"ה כתלמיד לפני רבו ושומעים כל פרשה ופרשה למה נכתבה.

Tan.B IV,145

84. והקב"ה דורש להם טעמי תורה חדשה שעתיד הקב"ה ליתן להם על ידי משיח.

AB 27

85. אין אסור גדול מן הנדה שהאשה רואה דם ואסרה הקב"ה לבעלה ולעתיד לבא הוא מתירה.

MT 146.4

86. ימי המשיח שאין בהם לא זכות ולא חובה.

VR 18.1

87. על השערים בתים ועליות ואורך הבתים ס׳ ריבוא מילין.

PGH 47

88. וכל בית ובית י"ב ריבוא מיל ולמעלה גבוה מאה ריבוא מיל.

MK 28

89. עתיד הקב"ה ליתן לכל צדיק וצדיק ג׳ אמות ועשרה עולמות.

TB San. 100a

90. היתה קומתו של אדם הראשון ממזרח למערב...ועתיד הקב"ה
להחזירה ליש׳.

MHG 5,4

91. שאל משה לשמשיאל ואמר לו כמה אורכה של ג"ע? אמר לו אין
חקר ואין מספר לג"ע ולכסאות שבו.

K'tapuaḥ 284

92. שבעה עולמות בראתי ומכלם לא בחרתי אלא עולם שביעי, ששה
לצאת ולבא ואחת שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחיי עולם.

MT 92.2

93. מה שמים וארץ שלא נבראו - אלא לכבודם של יש׳ חיים ומקיימים
לעולם ולעולמי עולמים, ק"ו לצדיקים שבעבורם נברא העולם.

Sifre D'barîm 47

94. ׳צדקתיך על משפטיך׳ כהררי אל על תהום רבה, מה הרים הללו
אין להם סוף כך הצדיקים אין להם סוף.

BR 33.1

95. ועתיד לגלות להם שם המפורש שבו נבראו שמים וארץ וכל העולם
כדי שיהיו חיים וקיימים לעד ושיהיו עושים אשר ירצו.

PH 64

96. כתיב ׳אם שן עבדו או שן אמתו יפיל לחפשי ישלחנו׳ מי
שייסורין באין עליו על אחת כמה וכמה.

BR 92.1

97. רשעים חשך גיהנם חשך תהום חשך.

BR 33.1

98. עתיד הקב"ה ליתן ממש מעט בע"ז והיא באה ומשתחוה להקב"ה.

MT 31.4

99. כל בעלי מומין מתרפאין לעוה"ב והנחש אינו מתרפא.

Tan.B III,47

100. גיהנם נתונה בירושלים.

PRK page 453

XUM

101. וכל כת וכת יש לו מדור בפני עצמו בג"ע וכנגדן שבעה בתי
דירות לרשעים בגיהנם.

MT 11.6

102. החומה החיצונית של אש שחורה נראית ואינה נראית.

SGE II,131

103. וגם אני לא באתי אלא כדי לסעוד עמכם.

Seʿudat Lev. 150

XUM

"Appendix -- Chapter 3"

1. עשאו בקעה והעלה עשבים והיו יש׳ ובהמתן אוכלים זרועים בהם.

ARN II,38

2. היתה פושטת ידה בין גלי הים ומלקטת לבנה תאנים ואפרסקים
ורמונים ונותנת אותן לבנה.

Y 764

3. מה במדבר לא חסרו כלום, אף בתהומות לא חסרו כלום.

SR 21.10

4. ׳ויהי בשלח פרעה את העם׳ זה שאמר הכתוב ׳שליחיך פרדס
רמונים׳ מה הפרדס הזה מלא מין עץ אילן עושה פרי למינו כך
יצאו יש׳ ממצרים מלאים כל טוב ממיני ברכות.

PRE 98

5. יצאו להן מים מתוקים מתוך מים מלוחים.

Mek.RS 60

6. הוציא להם מתוקין מתוך מלוחין ושתו הם ובהמתן שנא׳ ׳ויוציא
נוזלים מסלע׳.

MT 114.7

7. נטל משה את המטה והכה על הים ונעשה נאדות והיו הנודות
מושכין שמן ודבש לתוך פיהן של תינוקות והן יונקין מהם.

ARN I,33

8. יצאו להם מים מתוקים ומהם נטלו בכליהם והיו שותים וכיון
שכלו המים היו מתרעמים.

Tan.B II,64

9. יש׳ נעשה להם המים מיני בשמים.

Mek. Širtaʾ 6

10. ׳והגפנים סמדר נתנו ריח׳ אלו הנשארים שעשו תשובה ונגאלו.

Šir R. II,13,1

11. מצרים שהיו נתונים באפילה רואין את יש׳ נתונים באורה
ואוכלין ושותין ושמחין.

Y 233

12. היו טעונות כסף וזהב ואבנים טובות ומרגוליות כדי שיטלו,
יש׳ את הביזה.

Mek.RS 65

13. הצרור של מרגליות - אלו יש׳.

SR 20.9

14. ועגני כבוד למעלה מהם שלא ישלוט בהן השמש.

ARN I,33

15. איכא היו יש׳ כשהיו אוכלוסין של פרעה זורקין חצים?
אלא שהקיפן הקב"ה בענני כבוד וסיכך עליהם ולא היו
מזיקין אותם.

PRK Paršah Aḫeret

16. קפא עליהם הים משני חלקים ולמעלן.

Mek. Širta̓ 6

17. מה עשה הקב"ה? שלח למיכאל השר הגדול ונעשה לחומות אש
בין יש׳ ובין מצרים.

PRE 98b

18. קפא הים משני חלקים ונעשה כמין בולוס של זכוכית.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 5

19. נעשה להם כחומה ונעשו בו חלונות שהיו יש׳ רואין זה את
זה...ומהלכין בתוך הים כאדם שהוא מהלך בביתו עד שיצאו
ליבשה.

Vayoša̔ 51

20. בים ראו אותו בפרהסיא...והיו העוללים מראים אותו באצבען
ואומרים ׳זה אלי ואנוהו׳.

Šir R. III,9,1

21. ׳הראיני את מראיך, השמיעני את קולך׳ אין דבר זה אמור
אלא על הים.

Mek.RS 143

22. התפלל משה באותה שעה והראה להם המקום תורמיות תורמיות
של מלאכי השרת עומדים לפניהם.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 3

XUM

23. 'אשר הציל אתכם מיד מצרים ומיד פרעה' מיד התנין הגדול ההוא.

Mek. ʿAmalek 3

24. נטל משה את המטה והכה על הים ונעשה סלעים סלעים שנא' 'אתה שברת ראשי תנינים על המים' והיכן משברין ראשי תנינים? הוי אומר ראשי תנינים אין משתברין אלא על הסלעים.

ARN I,33

25. אמר לו הקב"ה למשה עבד מסרב לרבו מה עושין לו? אמר לו משה מלקין אותו במטה אמר לו הקב"ה אף אתה הרם את מטך ונטה ידך על הים ובקעהו, מיד 'ויט משה את ידו על הים ובקעהו'.

Vayošaʿ 38

26. 'הים ראה' ראה שם המפורש חקוק על המטה וברח.

MT 114.9

27. מה עשה הקב"ה? נתן ימינו על ימינו של משה...מיד ראה הים להקב"ה וברח.

SR 21.6

28. הקב"ה הרכיב ידו על ידו של משה ונקרע הים.

PH 37

29. לא מפניך אני בורח אלא 'מלפני אדון חולי ארץ' מלפני אדון שיצר את הארץ.

MT 114.9

30. אתה ברשותי והים ברשותי ואני עשיתיך גזבר עליו.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 4

31. נטל משה את המטה והכה על הים ונעשה לפניהם גזרים גזרים.

ARN I,33

32. קרע להם את הים לשנים עשר קרעים שנא' 'לגוזר ים סוף לגזרים'.

SR 24.1

33. נחלק לי"ב שבילים.

Tan. B'šalaḥ 10

34. ביום שנקוו המים בו ביום נקפאו ונעשו לי"ב שבילים שהם כנגד
י"ב שבטים.

PRE 99a

34A. אמר משה לפני הקב"ה אתה אומר לי שאקרע את הים ואעשה אותו
יבשה, והרי כתוב ´ אשר שמתי חול גבול לים´ והרי נשבעת
שאין אתה קורעו לעולם. אמר לו הקב"ה...כך התניתי מתחילה
שאני קורעו (הלוי: ואין כאן שנוי מעשה בראשית).

SR 21.6

35. נטל משה מטהו והכה על הים ונעשה נקבים נקבים.

ARN I,33

36. אם לאדם הראשון שהוא יחידי עשיתי לו יבשה...לעדת קדושים
אלו איני עושה להם את הים יבשה?

Mek. B'šalaḥ 4

37. באותה שעה ברא להם הקב"ה בריה חדשה לאמר לאלה בראתי עולם.

PH 38

38. צר צורה במים...צר צורה באפילה.

Mek.RS 93

39. כל מבועי מים וכל מקוות שבעולם ואפילו מים שבכדים ושבגתות
ושבזיקין ושבכל הכלים שבעולם נבקעו ונחלקו באותה שעה.

MT 18.19

40. נבקעו כל מעיני תהום.

MT 18.19

41. אע"פ שמצרים עובדי עבודה זרה מגלי עריות ושופכי דמים לא
נפרעתי מהם אלא בשבילכם.

Mek. RS 138

42. ´החודש הזה לכם´ אמר הקב"ה ליש´ בני חידוש גאולה לכם כאן.

PR 78b

43. מהו ´גוי מקרב גוי´? כאדם שהוא שומט את העובר מתוך מעי
הבהמה בזמנו כך הוציא הקב"ה את יש´ ממצרים.

MT 114.6

44. למדנו צער לנשמט ומניין אף לשומט? שנא׳ ׳ויוציא אתכם מכור,
הברזל ממצרים׳ כאדם שהוא נוטל את האש מתוך הכור שלא בצבת
ושלא בסמרטוטין כביכול כן עשה הקב"ה ליש׳.

MT 114.6

45. כי הנה הסתו עבר.

SR 15.1

46. ׳אני חבצלת השרון׳...אני הוא שהייתי חבויה בצלו של ים
ולשעה קלה הרטבתי מעשים טובים כשושנה.

Šir R. II,1,1

47. ׳ויהי באשמורת הבקר׳ זה היה עם הנץ החמה.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 6

48. כשהמקום נפרע מהרשעים אין נפרע מהם אלא בבקר.

Mek.RS 64

49. נותנים לבתולה שנים עשר חדשים משתבעה הבעל לפרנס את עצמה
ואני לא עשיתי כן אלא עד שאתם עוסקין בטיט ולבנים קפצתי
וגאלתי אתכם.

Šir R. IV,8,1

50. עבודה זרה היתה בידן של יש׳ והסיעה משה באותה שעה.

Mek.RS 102

51A. מיד הביאו התינוקות שבמעי אמן ומשדי אמן ועמדו כריסן
כזכוכית וראו להקב"ה מתוך כריסן ומדברים עמו.

MT 8.4

51. משל לאשה שהיתה נדה השלימה ימי נדתה וטהרה.

SR 23.12

52. כשהיו המצרים רואים אותנו באים להרגנו ואתה ברחמך הרבים
היית מצוה את האדמה ובלעה אותנו ופולטת אותנו במקום אחר.

Vayošaʿ 41

53. כיון שמכירים בהם מצרים באין להורגן ונעשה להם נס
ונבלעין בקרקע ומביאין שורים וחורשים על גבן...לאחר
שהולכין היו מבצבצין ויוצאין כעשב השדה.

TB Soṭah 11b

XUM

54. והקב"ה מוציא דדים מן הסלעים ומניקין אותן.

SER 43

55. מלקט להם שני עגולים: אחד של שמן ואחד של דבש שנא׳ ׳וינקהו
דבש מסלע ושמן מחלמיש צור׳.

SR 1.12

56. ואימתי מתו? בימי האפילה שהיו מצריים שרויין בחשך.

Mek.RS 45

57. מהו ׳מקרב גוי׳? שהיו מובלעין בתוך מעיהם.

MT 114.6

58. החירות מצד זה ומגדול מצד זה הים לפניהם ומצרים מאחריהם.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 2

59. ראו יש׳ שהם מוקפים מארבע רוחות: הים סוגר והשונא רודף
והחיות מן המדבר.

SR 21.5

60. כיון שראו יש׳ הים סוגר והשונא רודף הפכו פניהם למדבר
מיד זימן הקב"ה חיות רעות ולא היו מניחות אותם לעבור.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 2

61. למה היו יש׳ דומין באותה שעה? ליונה שברחה מפני הנץ
ונכנסה לנקיק הסלע והיה נחש נושף בו.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 3

62. מה יונה זו פושטת צוארה לשחיטה כך יש׳.

Šir R. I,15,2

63. אחת אומרת ניפול לים ואחת אומרת נחזור למצרים ואחת
אומרת נעשה מלחמה ואחת אומרת נצווח.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 3

64. אלמלא צעקתך כבר אבדתי אותם מן העולם.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 3

65. ולמה עשה הקב"ה להם כך? אלא שהיה הקב"ה מתאווה
לתפילתם...והיה הקב"ה מבקש לשמע את קולם פעם אחרת
ולא היו רוצים.

SR 21.5

66. כשראו יש׳ המצרים נוסעים אחריהם נבהלו ופרחה נשמתם.

Vayošaʿ 45

67. מה יונה זו מכפרת על העוונות כך יש׳ מכפרים על האומות...
שלא יצדה העולם מהם (מתנות כהונה: שלא יהא העולם תהו).

Šir R. I,15,2

68. ׳לגוזר ים סוף לגזרים׳ שכן בלשון ארמי קורין למהולין
גזורין בזכות המילה נקרע הים.

Y 241

69. לא היה רוצה ליקרע למה? שהיו ממרים אמר הם ממרים ואני
אקרע?

MT 114.9

70. ונטה משה את ידו על הים ולא קבל עליו להבקע והראהו ארון
יוסף והמטה שחקק עליו שם המפורש ולא קבל.

PRE 98b

71. אמר לו משה בשם הקב"ה שיבקע לא קבל עליו הראהו את המטה
ולא קבל עליו.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 5

72. כשעמדו יש׳ על הים היו השבטים מנצחים זה עם זה, זה אומר
אני יורד תחלה לים וזה אומר אני יורד תחלה לים.

TB Soṭah 36b

73. לא כך היה מעשה אלא זה אומר אין אני יורד תחילה לים וזה
אומר אין אני יורד תחילה לים.

TB Soṭah 37a

74. על הים המרו שלא היו רוצים לרד אלולי שבט יהודה שקפץ
תחלה וקדש שמו של הקב"ה.

SR 24.1

75. בשעה שהיו יש׳ עומדין ומדיינין על הים זה אומר אני יורד
תחלה וזה אומר אני יורד תחלה, אמר משה לשבט ראובן ולא
קבל לשמעון ולא קבל.

M.Hallel 95

76. נטלו אבנים ורגמו זה את זה.

MT 114.8

77. ועל זכות אותה רגימה הלבישו הקב"ה בארגמן ונתן לו המלכות.

M.Hallel 95

78. אמר הקב"ה למשה ידידיי הם טבועים בים ואתה עומד והתפלל.

MT 76.1

79. לא נקרע להם הים עד שבאו לתוכו עד חטמם.

SR 21.10

80. כשנכנסו יש' לים כבר הר המוריה נעקר ממקומו...ויצחק
כאילו עקוד ונתון על גבי המזבח ואברהם כאילו פושט ידו
ולוקח את המאכלת לשחוט את בנו, אמר הקב"ה למשה בני
נתונים בצרה והים סוגר והשונא רודף ואתה עומד ומאריך
בתפילה?

Mek. B'šalaḥ 3

81. אז אמרו המלאכים הושיעני אלהים כי באו מים עד נפש.

Vayošaʿ 52

82. אלו הקטנים כיון שהגיעו למילה ברחו.

M.Hallel 96

83. תהום כפה עליהם מלמעלה ועברו בו יש'.

ARN I,33

84. קפאו תהומות בלב הים.

Mek.RS 60

85. מגיד שהים שקול כנגד כל מעשה בראשית.

Mek. Baḥodeš 7

86. הקיף לבו של הים ועלה הים והיה ממלא את כל גדותיו.

ARN II,38

87. הגביה את גליו מלמעלה שש מאות מיל.

Vayošaʿ 51

88. ומנין שאף המים נתמלא עליהם חמה? שנא' 'והמים להם חמה'
אל תקרי חומה אלא חימה.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 7

XUM

89. הלכו יש׳ לבא אל ים סוף וחוזרים לאחורים יראים שמא ישובו
המים עליהם.

PRE 99a

90. כיון שירדו לתוך הים היה מלא טיט...והיה אומר ראובן לשמעון
במצרים בטיט ובים בטיט במצרים בחמר ולבנים ובים ׳חמר מים
רבים׳.

SR 24.1

91. ׳וישם את הים לחרבה׳ עשאו כחרבה.

Mek.RS 62

92. ומים שבין הגזרים ירדה אש וליחכתן.

ARN I,33

93. מגיד הכתוב שהיו יש׳ נתונים בדין באותה שעה אם להנצל אם
ליאבד עם מצרים.

Y 233

94. על אלו ועל אלו הפך הים מה עשה הקב"ה? ימינו אחת מצלת
את יש׳ וימינו אחת משקעת את מצרים.

MT 18.20

95. באותה שעה נתמלא עליהם שר של ים חמה ובקש לשטפם עד שגער
בו הקב"ה ויבשו.

SR 24.1

96. אמר הקב"ה כשם ששתי על המצריים לאבדן בים כך ששתי לאבד
שוניאיהם של יש׳.

Šir R. I,9,4

97. יש׳ אומרים להם ׳דודי צח ואדום׳ צח לי בארץ מצרים ואדום
למצרים...צח לי בים...ואדום לי בים...צח לי בעוה"ב ואדום
לי בעוה"ז.

Šir R. V,9,1

98. הם חשבו לשקע את יש׳ במים לפיכך שקע אותם במים לפי שאין
הקב"ה דן את האדם אלא מדה כנגד מדה.

Vayošaʿ 45

99. החזיר עליהן את הגלגל שיחזור עליהן זדונן.

Mek.RS 66

100. במדה שאדם מודד בו מדדתה לו...הוא העביד את בני יש׳ בפרך,
אף אתה הקשית עליהן מים כטיט יהיו משתקעין בו, אין טביעה
אלא בטיט.

Mek. RS 83

101. כשעברו בים צלמו של מיכה עבר עמהם.

Tan.B IV,79

102. כשיש׳ עושין רצונו של מקום הוא נלחם להם...וכשאין יש׳
עושין רצונו של מקום הוא נלחם בם.

Mek. Širtaʾ 5

103. סתם עליהם הים מארבע רוחותיו...נפרץ הים הגדול לתוכו
והים נלחם בהן...עלה תהום התחתון והעליון והיו נלחמים
במצרים...כל מים שבעולם חזרו ויכסו את הרכב ואת הפרשים.

Mek.RS 67,83,84

104. עלה תהום התחתון על תהום העליון וחיפה עליהן את הרקיע
והקדיר עליהן את הכוכבים.

Mek. Širtaʾ 5

104A. אף אתה הקשית להן מים כאבנים והיו מכין אותן על מקום
האבנים שלהן.

Mek.RS 84

105. כך היתה נפשם של מצריים צרורה בהם ולא מוציאין ולא
מכניסין מעולפים מריח הים.

Mek. Širtaʾ 6

106. ׳ויהם את מחנה מצרים׳ הממן וערבבן נטל סגניות שלהן ולא
היו יודעין מה הם עושין.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 6

107. במכות שהיו אלו שעל הים לוקין היו אל שבמצרים לוקין
והיו רואין אלו את אלו.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 6

108. ׳וירא יש׳ את מצרים מת על שפת הים׳...כדי שיהיו יש׳
נותנים עיניהם בהם ומכירים אותם...וירא יש׳ את מצרים
מתים אין כתיב כאן אלא ׳מת על שפת הים׳ מתים ולא מתים.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 7

XUM

109. מיד השיב לו הקב"ה שוטה בעולם וכי לדעתם עבדוה והלא לא עבדוה אלא מתוך שעבוד ומתוך טרוף דעת?...כיון ששמע שר של ים אות חמה שנתמלא על יש׳ החזירה על מצרים.

Y 234

110. אותה מדת הדין שהיתה מתוחה כנגד יש׳ הפכה הקב"ה כנגד מצרים.

Y 233

111. כל מה שהיה פרעה עושה היה הקב"ה עושה. יצא פרעה כגבור והקב"ה כגבור...יצא פרעה לבוש כלי זיין והקב"ה כך.

Tan. Šofṭim 14

112. עביו כנגד חורמיות שלהם ברד כנגד בלסטראות שלהם גחלי כנגד טורמנטא שלהם אש כנגד נפט שלהם.

Mek. B'šalaḥ 3

113. בשעה שיצא פרעה לרדוף אחרי בני יש׳ אמר פרעה תנו לי סוס זכר...מה עשה הקב"ה? היה מראה כנגדו! ורכב עליו...חזר פרעה ואמר תנו לי סוס נקבה...(ה׳) אמר אף אני אדמה לו בסוס נקבה.

MT 18.14

114. נדמו יש׳ לסוסים נקבות ומצריים הרשעים זכרים מזוהמים והיו רצים אחריהם עד ששקעו בים.

Šir R. I,9,6

115. כשבא פרעה לים בא על סוס זכר ונגלה עליו הקב"ה בסוסיה נקבה...והלא לא רכב אלא על כרוב?...אלא נדמה הכרוב לסוסי פרעה כנקבה ונכנסו כולם לים.

ARN I,27

116. ארבעה נקראו אדירים: נגלה הקב"ה שהוא אדיר על יש׳ שנקראו אדירים להפרע ממצרים שנקראו אדירים במים שנקראו אדירים.

Mek. Širtaʾ 7

117. מה נקבה זו טוענת ופורקת וטוענת ופורקת וחוזרת ופורקת ושוב אינה טוענת, כך יש׳ משתעבדין ונגאלין משתעבדין ונגאלין וחוזרין ונגאלין ושוב אין משתעבדין לעולם... בעוה"ז על ידי שצרתן צרת נקבה יולדת הן אומרים שירה לפניו בלשון נקבה אבל לעוה"ב שצרתן אין צרת יולדת הן אומרים שיר בלשון זכר.

Šir R. I,5,3

XUM

.118 כדי אמנה שהאמינו בי יש׳ במצרים אני קורע להן את הים.

Mek.RS 58

.119 כיון שקרע להם את הים האמינו בו.

SR 22.3

"Appendix -- Chapter 4"

1. לא היו חסרים אלא להזכיר דבר והוא נברא לפניהם.
אפילו דבור לא היו חסרים אלא מי שהיה מהרהר בלבו דבר הוא
נעשה מיד.

SR 21.10

2. כיון שיצאו נעשו פרדס רמונים.

SR 20.5

3. נעשו כגפן היין.

SR 20.5

4. היה אותו מקום מקולקל במים יהר מכל המקומות שהרי היו שם
שנים עשר מבועים ולא סיפקו אלא שבעים דקלים וכשבאו יש׳
חנו ששים רבוא בני אדם וסיפקו להם מים ולנו ושנו ושלשו.

MHG Exodus 16:27

5. ׳ויחנו שם על המים׳ מלמד שהיו יושבין ועוסקין בתורה.

Mek.RS 105

6. כיון שיצאו המים השקו כל אהליהם של יש׳ (הלוי: ולא היו
צריכים לילך אל הצור לקבל מימיו).

SR 26.2

7. מהו מדבר שור? שנתאוו יש׳ לעשות יש׳ שורות שורות דגלים
דגלים.

SR 24.4

8. מחנות מחנות, דגלים דגלים, שורות שורות כמטעת של כרם.

Šir R. II,3,3

9. נעשו כגפן היין...נעשו שורות שורות.

SR 20.5

10. ברא שם שנים עשר מבועים כנגד שנים עשר שבטים ושבעים דקלים
כנגד שבעים זקנים.

Mek.RS 105

11. היה מסובב למשכנות שתי אמות היתה נטולה מן הארץ.

Mek.RS 109

XUM

12. והרבצתי אתכם בסגמטים...הרביצם כדרך שהמלכים רבוצים על
מטותיהם.

BaR 1.2

13. ׳ויסב אלהים את העם דרך המדבר׳ מאי ויסב? מלמד שהרביצם
כדרך שהמלכים מסובין רבוצין על מיטותיהן.

Tan. B'midbar 2

14. מה שהיה עליהן לא בלו אבל מה שהיה להן בתוך התיבות
נתבלו.

DR VII,11

15. ולא היו מסריחין מריח הזיע שלא היו מחליפין לבושיהן?...
הבאר היה מעלה להן מיני דשאים ומיני בשמים והיו מגעגעין
בהם...והיה ריחו נודף מסוף העולם ועד סופו.

MT 23.4

16. לא אני בעצמי הייתי מאיר לכם? שנא׳ ׳וה׳ הולך לפניהם
יומם׳.

Tan.B V,4

17. ׳ויסעו מסכות׳ אין סכות אלא ענני כבוד...וכן לעתיד לבא
׳וסוכה תהיה לצל יומם מחורב׳.

Mek.RS 47

18. נעשו פרדס רמונים...מצא בה מים חיים...בנה בה מגדל...
הושיב בתוכה שומר שנא׳ ׳ה׳ שמרך׳.

SR 20.5

19. והיה מכה לפניהם את הסלעים ואם מקום נמוך - היה מגביהו,
ואם היה מקום גבוה - היה משפילו ועושה אותם מישור.

BaR 1.2

20. אחד שהיה מהלך לפניהם רחוק שלשה ימים והיה מכה לפניהם את
הנחשים ואת העקרבים ואת השרפים.

BaR 1.2

21. ואחד הולך לפניהם ומכה להם נחשים ועקרבים ומשוה להם את
ההרים ואת העמקים ושורף את הקוצים ואת הסירות.

Tan. B'midbar 2

XUM

22. כשהיו יש׳ במדבר...היו שני זקוקים של אש יוצאים מבין שני
בדי הארון והיו שורפים לפניהם את הנחשים ואת העקרבים.

DR VII,9

23. מכה את הנחשים והעקרבים ומכבד ומרבץ לפניהם.

Sifre N. 83

24. והקב"ה מרוב אהבה שאהב את יש׳ היה שולח לנחשים שהיו עושין
עצמן כגשר ויש׳ עוברין עליהן כאדם שעובר על הגשר.

Vayošaʿ 46

25. ועושה להם דרך סרט ומישור.

Mek.RS 47

26. השכינה הייתה סובלת אותם טעונים על ענני כבוד ומוקפין
בהם.

PR 55a

27. ׳כל המחלה ששמתי במצרים לא אשים עליך׳ הא אם לא תשמע, ואם
חוזר בך ׳כי אני ה׳ רופאך׳.

Mek. Vayosaʿ 1

28. היה שם נחשים כקורות בית הבד ועקרבים כמלא הזרת.

Tan.B II,63

29. מדבר שור זה מדבר כזב.

Tan. B'šalaḥ 18

30. ׳גם כי אלך בגיא צלמות׳ בקדקדו של מדבר.

MT 23.5

31. מהו צלמות? מקום צל ועמו מות.

Mek. Vayosaʿ 1

32. אין אפעה אלא עכס. אמרו שעכס זה רואה צל עוף פורח באויר
מיד מכרכר ונושר אברים אברים.

Mek. Vayosaʿ 1

33. אף בכליהם לא מצאו.

Mek. Vayosaʿ 1

XUM

34. והלא המים תחת רגלי יש׳ היו? והארץ אינה צפה אלא על המים...
׳ולא מצאו מים׳ אלא כדי ליגען.

Mek. Vayosa῾ 1

35. עד כאן לא נגע בהם צמאון אבל כאן נגע בהם צמאון.

Mek. Vayosa῾ 7

36. אין לך מיתה קשה מרעב.

Mek. Vayosa῾ 2

37. ממצרים לא"י אחד עשר מסעות אלא נשאם הקב"ה דרך המדבר
ארבעים שנה.

SR 20.13

38. הקב"ה בדבר שהוא מכה בו הוא מרפא...צא ולמד ממרה שהורה
למשה דבר מר והשליך למים ונמתקו המים.

SR 23.3

39. מרים להיו לפי שעה ונמתקו.

Mek. Vayosa῾ 1

40. מרים היו מתחלתם.

Mek. Vayosa῾ 1

41. מטה זה של פורענות הוא. הוא הבאיש המים במצרים והוא הביא
עשר מכות על המצרים. אמר לו הקב"ה...במה שאני מכה בו אני
מרפא. לכך נאמר ׳ומטך אשר הכית בו את היאור קח בידך׳ כדי
שידעו הכל שהוא של ברכה.

SR 26.2

42. כשבא הקב"ה לים ברח מלפניו...בא במדבר חורב קדם אותו
וקלס אותו...אמר זו העיר טובה היא מכל המדינות, בה אני
בונה אכסניה ודר בתוכה.

BaR 1.2

43. אמר המדבר אני מדבר וחביב אני שכל טובות שבעולם חבויין
בי...נתנם לי הקב"ה שיהיו שמורים בי וכשהקב"ה מבקשם ממני
אני מחזיר לו פקדונו בלא חסרון.

Šir R. II,1,2

44. למה נתנה במדבר?...מי מקיים את התורה? מי שמשים עצמו
כמדבר ומפליג עצמו מן הכל.

BaR 19.26

45. אם אין אדם מפקיר עצמו כמדבר הזה אינו זוכה לדברי תורה.

PRK 12

46. מדבר זה רק מכל מעדנים...אין התורה מתקיימת אלא במי שמשים
עצמו כמדבר.

Mek.RS 137

47. מדבר אין בו לא עון ולא חטא כך אבות הראשונים אין בהם לא
עון ולא חטא.

Mek. Vayosaʿ 3

48. מה המדבר אין לו סוף כך היא התורה אין לו סוף.

PRK 12

49. ´ה´ אלהיך...המוליכך במדבר הגדול והנורא´ אין אנו יודעים
למי הוא אומר ´גדול´ אם להקב"ה אם למדבר. אלא אמר להם
משה ´גדול ונורא הוא אלהים´.

SR 24.4

50. בכל מסעות כתוב ´ויסעו...ויחנו´ נוסעים במחלקת וחונים
במחלקת.

VR 9.9

51. ולא היו נשרפים מן הענן שהוא אש? אל תתמה על זו, אסביסטון
זה אין מגהצים אותו אלא באש. אף בגדיהם שהיו מעשה שמים
הענן שף בהם ולא היו מזיקם.

DR VII,11

52. כשהיו יש´ במדבר...היו אוה"ע רואים אותם והיו אומרים:
אלוהות הם אלו, כל תשמישם אינו אלא באש.

DR VII,9

XUM

1. ששים אמה היה גבהו של מן שהיה יורד להם ליש׳.

Mek.RS 111

2. אלפים אמה היה יורד המן בכל יום.

Y 258

3. מזון אלפים שנה היה יורד המן ליש׳ בכל יום ויום.

MT 78.3

4. ירד להם מזון שני אלפים שנה בכל יום.

Tos. Soṭah 4.3

5. שתי אמות היתה גבוהה מן הארץ כדי שיהיה אדם עומד כנגד לבו
ונוטל שלא בצער.

Mek. Vayosaʿ 4

6. לפתח ביתו היה יושב ומלקט פרנסתו ופרנסת ביתו.

Sifre N. 89

7. הוריד להם את המן שהיה בו מכל מיני מטעמים והיה כל אחד
מיש׳ טועם כל מה שהיה רוצה.

SR 25.3

8. מלמד שנשתנה להם לכל המתבשלים בקדרה...מלמד שנשתנה להם
לכל המתאפים בתנור.

Sifre N. 89

9. המן שלא היה יורד להם ליש׳ אלא לפי כח של כל אחד ואחד
מהם. הבחורים היו אוכלין אותו כלחם...הזקנים כצפיחית...
והיונקים כחלב משדי אמם.

Tan. Š'mot 25

10. ולמי הוא מתוקן עכשיו? לצדיקים לעוה"ב מי שהוא מאמין זוכה
ואוכל.

Y 258

11. כיון שהיה השמש באה עליו היה נימוק ונעשה נחלים נחלים
ושוטף ויורד.

Y 258

12. כשהורדת להם מן היה יורד כשם שהמטר יורד ואין לו קצבה.

Tan.B II,66

13. והרוח מנשבת בו ונעשה כמין שולחנית של זהב.

Mek.RS 109

14. ׳דק ככפור על הארץ׳ מה כפור זה דק והארץ בולעתו כך המן
דק והאיברים בלעו אותו ואין לך אדם מיש׳ שנצרך לנקביו.

MT 78.3

15. השויתי אתכם למלאכי השרת שלא יהיו נפנין.

MT 78.4

16. כשם שהנביא מגיד להן חדרים וסתרים ליש׳ כך היה המן מגיד
ליש׳ חדרים וסתרים.

Mek.RS 115

17. כל אותן הימים עד שלא עשו אותו המעשה חיו טובים לפני
הקב"ה ממלאכי השרת ולא משל בהם מלאך המות ולא היו יוצאין
לנקביהן כבני אדם.

PRE 112a

18. מן ששאלו אותו כהלכה ניתן להן בפנים מאירות.

Mek.RS 107

19. מה שד זה אם יונק ממנו התינוק כל היום כולו אין מזיקו
כך היה המן.

Tos. Soṭah 4.3

20. מה הדד הזה שהוא מין אחד ומשתנה למינים הרבה כך היה המן
משתנה להם ליש׳ לכל דבר שהם רוצים.

Sifre N. 89

21. הגויים טועמים אותו מר כגד.

SR 5.9

22. ומה היו עושים? היו צדין צבי שהיה שותה ממנו וטועמים
ממנו מטעמו של מן והיו אומרים אשרי הגוי שככה לו.

Tan.B II,67

XUM

23. אתה מוצא ביום שירד המן ליש׳ בו ביום עבדו יש׳ עבודה זרה,
ולא עוד אלא שנטלו ממנו והקריבו לע"ז שלהם.

PRK 10

24. בשר שאלו אותו שלא כענין ניתן להן בפנים חשכות.

Mek.RS 107

25. נתחלפו להן מעשה בראשית נעשו עליונים תחתונים, והתחתונים
עליונים...התחיל הלחם יורד מן השמים...והטל עולה מן הארץ.

Mek.RS 106

26. מגדילין להן כל מיני מעדנים מעין עוה"ב.

Y 426

27. מגדלים מיני דשאים ואילנות שאין להם סוף.

BaR 19.26

28. היתה הבאר מתגברת והולכת מאהל לאהל ולא היה אחד מצטער
לילך למלאות ממקום אחד.

M.Šir 36b

29. מי הבאר נאים לשתות ונאים לרחוץ נוח לעצם ומרפא לנפש.

MT 23.4

30. כשהיו חונים במדבר היתה הבאר מעלה על גנים מיני בשמים
והיו נשי יש׳ לוקטות מהם ועושים מהם מיני בשמים.

M.Šir 36b

31. המים היו יוצאין חוץ למחנה ומקיפין פיסא גדולה שנא׳
׳ינחני במעגלי צדק׳.

Tan.B IV,128

32. היו מימי הבאר יוצאין ונעשין נהרים נהר אחד יוצא
ומקיף את מחנה שכינה ומאותו נהר יוצאין ארבע נהרות בד׳
זויות החצר.

Y 426

33. נהר גדול מקיף את כל מחנה יש׳ מבחוץ ונעשים נהרים נהרים
בין כל שבט ושבט והיו הנהרות מודיעין בין כל אחת ואחת
גבולין.

Y 426

XUM

34. והיאך היתה הבאר עשויה? כמין סלע כמין כוורת או כדורת.

Tan. B'midbar 2

35. כך היתה הבאר שהיתה עם יש׳ במדבר דומה לסלע מלא כברה מפכפכת ועולה כמפי הפך הזה.

Tos. Sukah 3.11

36. נשיאי יש׳ סובבין אותה במקלותיהן ואומרין עליה את השירה שנא׳ ׳עלי באר ענו לה׳ המים מבעבעין ועולין כעמוד למעלה וכל אחד ואחד מושך במקלו איש לשבטו ואיש למשפחתו.

Tos. Sukah 3.11

37. ורווח שהיה בין הדגלים מלא מים מגוברים. אשה שהיתה צריכה לילך אצל חברתה מדגל לדגל היתה מהלכת בספינה.

BaR 19.26

38. אין השונא בא אלא על החטא ועל העבירה.

Mek.RS 120

39. מה כתיב למעלה מהענין? ׳ויסעו כל עדת בני יש׳ ואין מים לשתות לעם׳...מיד באו לעשות מריבה עם משה ואמרו לו למה זה העליתנו ממצרים.

SR 26.2

40. מאי לשון רפידים? שריפו עצמן מדברי תורה.

TB San. 106a

41. אלמלא שמרו יש׳ שבת ראשונה לא שלטה בהן אומה ולשון שנא׳ ׳ויהי ביום השביעי יצאו מן העם ללקט׳ וכתיב בתריה ׳ויבא עמלק׳.

TB Šabbat 118b

42. יבא עמלק כפוי טובה ויפרע מן העם כפויי טובה.

Mek. ʿAmalek 1

43. אם מהרהרים אנו בלבנו והוא יודע מה שאנו מהרהרים נעבדנו ואם לאו נמרד בו. אמר להם הקב"ה אם בקשתם לבדק אותי יבא הרשע ויבדק אתכם. מיד ׳ויבא עמלק׳.

SR 26.2

44. אמר לו משה ליהושע צא מתחת כנפי הענן והלחם בעמלק.

Mek.RS 120

45. והיה עמוד הענן סובב את מחנה יש׳ כעיר מוקפת חומה... ועמלק
היה מזנב והורג כל מי שאחורי הענן.

PRE 104a

46. כל מי שהיה הענן פולטו היה ניצול.

Tan.B V,42

47. לא היה הורג אלא בני אדם שנמשכו מדרכי המקום ונחשלו מתחת
כנפי הענן.

M.Tannaim 170

48. מה היה עושה להם עמלק? היה מחתך את זכרותם והיה משליך
אותם למעלה ואמר בזו חפצת? הרי היא נתונה לך.

PR 53b

49. ׳אשר קרך בדרך׳ אשר קרך טימאך כד"א ׳מקרה לילה׳.

Tan.B V,41

50. לא היו יש׳ יודעין מה טיבא של זמורה אלא ׳והנם שולחים את
הזמורה אל אפם׳ וכיון שבא עמלק לימדה להם.

PRK 3

51. למדנו שהמלחמה הזאת לא היתה אלא על פי הגבורה.

Mek. ʿAmalek 1

52. ׳הנצנים נראו בארץ׳ הנצוחות נראו בארץ. איזה הם? משה
ואהרון.

Šir R. II,12,1

53. כל זמן שזרעו של עמלק בעולם לא השם שלם ולא הכס שלם,
אבד זרעו של עמלק מן העולם הכס שלם והשם שלם.

Tan.B V,45

"Appendix -- Chapter 6"

1. הרכין הקב"ה שמים התחתונים ושמי שמים העליונים על ראש
ההר וירד הכבוד והציען על גבי הר סיני כאדם שהוא מציע
את הכר על גבי המטה.

Mek. Baḥodeš 4

2. עד מקום שיכול פסיפסטס לחשוב, אלף אלפי אלפים וריבי
רבבות.

MT 68.10

3. רבותיים שאין להם מנין, אלפי שאין להם מספר.

PR 103b

4. ׳והגבלת את העם׳ שומע אני למזרחו ת"ל סביב.

Mek. Baḥodeš 3

5. ויהי קולות: קול הדבור וקול השופר וקול הרעש וקול
אבנים מתפוצצים.

PH 41

6. עשרים ושנים אלף מרכבות של מלאכים...והיו כולם עשויים
דגלים דגלים.

Tan.B IV,13

6A. שם מיכאל ודגלו גבריאל ודגלו. אמרה הלוואי נסע כטכסים
הזה של מעלן באותה שעה אמר הקב"ה הואיל ונתאוו בני
להיות כדגלים יחנו בדגלים.

Šir R. VI,10,1

7. אמרה כנסת יש׳...ונתן לי שם דגלי תורה ומצוות ומעשים
טובים.

Šir R. II,4,1

8. לא זבים ולא מצורעים...ולא שממין לא טפשין ולא חלוקי לב.

Šir R. IV,7,1

9. אמר הקב"ה התורה כולה שלימה...אתן אותה לדור זה ויש בהן
בעלי מומין?...מה עשה הקב"ה? ריפא אותן...מי שהיה סומא
היה רואה.

Tan.B II,76

10. חידוש דברים אני מחדש בכם ועושה בכם מעין דוגמא העוה"ב.

PRK 12

11. כיון שבאו לפני הר סיני נעשו כלם חניה אחת...´ויחן שם יש´´ אמר הקב"ה הרי שעה שאני נותן תורה לבני.

VR 9.9

12. ´ויחן שם יש´´ השוו כלם לב אחד.

Mek. Baḥodeš 1

13. וכל העתידים להבראות עד סוף כל הדורות שם עמדו עמהם בהר סיני.

PRE 97b

14. יצר הטוב ויצר הרע שהיה בהם נעשו שניהם לב אחד של יצר טוב.

PR 174a

15. נגלה הקב"ה על יש´ בהר סיני וממקומו נתלש הר סיני ונפתחו השמים ונכנס ראש ההר בשמים.

PRE 95b

16. משה היו רגליו עומדות בהר וכולו בתוך השמים.

PRE 96b

17. ´ויעל עשנו כעשן הכבשן´...אי ככבשן יכול ככבשן זה בלבד ת"ל וההר בוער באש עד לב שמים.

Mek. Baḥodeš 4

18. ´ומרא כבוד ה´ כאש אוכלת בראש ההר לעיני בני יש´´... שבע מחיצות של אש היו כוססות זו בזו והיו יש´ רואים ולא מתיראים ולא מתפחדים.

BaR 11.3

19. ונפתחו רקיעים והראה הקב"ה כבודו ליש´.

PH 42

20. ראה הפחות בימי משה מה שלא ראו יחזקאל גדול הנביאים; בני אדם שדברה עמהם שכינה פנים בפנים.

DR VII,8

XUM

21. אלא שראו פני הקב"ה שכל הרואה פני הקב"ה אינו מת.

MT 68.10

22. בשעה שעמדו יש׳ לפני הר סיני ואמרו נעשה ונשמע באותה שעה
קרא הקב"ה למלאך המות ואמר לו אף על פי שמניתיך קיפקליטור
קוזמוקרוטיר על בריותי אין לך עסק באומה זו.

Šir R. VIII,6,1

23. ׳והמכתב מכתב אלהים חרות על הלוחות׳ אל תקרי חרות אלא
חירות. חירות ממלאך המות...חירות מן המלכויות...חירות
מן היסורין.

Šir R. VIII,6,1

24. כל אותה הדור ששמעו קולו של הקב"ה בהר סיני זכו להיות
כמלאכי השרת.

PRE 98a

25. ומחזיק היה ההר? אלא א"ל הקב"ה הרחב הארך וקבל בני אדונך.

Tan.B II,77

26. ׳ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש׳ מכאן אמרו ראויין היו יש׳ לאכל
בקדשים עד שלא עשו את העגל.

Mek.RS 139

27. כל דיבור ודיבור שיצא מפי הקב"ה קושרים לו שני כתרים.

TB Šabbat 88b

28. והיה אחד נותן עטרה בראשו ואחד חוגרו זיין.

MT 103.8

29. כלי זיין הלבישן ושם המפורש כתוב עליו וכל ימים שהיה
בידם לא היה דבר רע נוהג בהם ולא מלאך המות.

Tan.B IV,76

30. משלו דברי תורה בזיין מה הזיין הזה מתקיים לבעליו בשעת
מלחמה כך דברי תורה מתקיימת.

Šir R. I,2,5

31. אחד נותן עטרות ואחד חוגרו זוניאות.

PR 37a

XUM

32. הלבישן פורפיראות.

MT 103.8

33. עטרות הלבישם...כלי זין נתן להם...פופירה הלבישם...
זוניאות הלבישם. וכשחטאו העביר מהם הקב"ה כול אותו הטוב.

SR 51.8

34. פתח הקב"ה שבעה רקיעים ונגלה עליהם עין בעין ביופיו
ובכבודו ובתוארו ובכתר שלו ובכסא כבודו.

PR 98b

35. אמרה כנסת יש׳ הביאני הקב"ה למרתף גדול של יין זה סיני.

Šir R. II,4,1

36. להיכן עבר? גנזו הקב"ה לצדיקים.

M.Šir 38b

37. ירד הקב"ה לסיני לתן הדברות שלא יהיה העולם מתמוטט.

SR 29.9

38. כיון שאמרו נעשה ונשמע נתיישב העולם על מכונו שנא׳ ׳אנכי
תכנתי עמודיה סלה׳.

MT 75.1

39. עד שלא קבלו יש׳ את התורה היה העולם עשוי מדבר כיון
שקבלו את התורה נעשה העולם שור.

SR 24.4

40. הדיבור היה יוצא מפי הקב"ה מימינו לימין של יש׳ וחוזר
ועוקף את מחנה יש׳ י"ח מיל על י"ח מיל וחוזר ומקיף
מימינן של יש׳ לימינו של הקב"ה והקב"ה מקבלו מימינו
וחוקקו על הלוח.

Šir R. I,2,2

41. אמר להם הקב"ה חידוש דברים אני עושה ומחדש אתכם.

PRK 12

42. היה הקב"ה מוציא הדיבור מפיו והוא נחלק לכמה מאורות.

MT 92.3

XUM

43. אע"פ שאתם נוסעים מצפון לדרום ומדרום לצפון לעולם תהיו
הופכים פנים למזרח...לימד שפני השכינה למזרח.

Mek.RS 137

44. מיד הביאו בני יש׳ נשיהם עם יונקי שדים ונשיהם מעוברות
ועשה הקב"ה בטניהם כזכוכית והיו מדברים עמו.

M.Aś.HaD. 68

45. למה קורין לסיני בית אמי? שמשם נעשו כתינוק בן יומא.

Šir R. VIII,2,1

47. כבר בא החתן ומבקש את הכלה להכניסה לחופה וממתין לה כדי
ליתן להם את התורה.

PRE 96b

48. עשרת הדברות שהיו מצמצים עליהן ככלה.

Šir R. IV,10,1

49. עלובה כלה מזנה בתוך חופתה.

TB Šabbat 88b

50. למה נקרא שמה רפידים? שריפו ידיהם מן העבירות. ׳בעצלתים
ימך המקרה׳ ׳וירד ה׳ על הר סיני על ראש ההר׳ ׳ובשפלות
ידלף הבית׳ על ידי ששפלו ידיהם מן העבירות ידלף הבית
מה כתוב? ׳ארץ רעשה גם שמים נטפו גם עבים נטפו מים׳
ואימתי היו כל הדברים האלה? ביום מתן תורה.

PRK 12

51. ׳וברקים׳ ברקי ברקים ומיני ברקים משונים זה מזה.

Mek. Baḥodeš 3

52. היה הקול יוצא מתוך ז׳ מחיצות: מתוך ענן מתוך ערפל מתוך
זיקים מתוך ברקים מתוך חשך מתוך רעמים ומתוך האש.

M.Šir 2b

53. ׳ומשה נגש אל הערפל׳ לפנים משלשה מחיצות...חשך מבחוץ ענן
מבפנים וערפל מלפני לפנים.

Mek. Baḥodeś 9

54. ׳ומשה נגש אל הערפל׳ מי גרם לו? ענותנותו...כל מי שהוא
עניו סופו להשרות שכינה עם אדם על הארץ.

Mek. Baḥodeś 9

XUM

55. היו יש׳ משולהבין מחמת האש של מעלה.

Mek. Baḥodeš 9

56. דברי תורה בודקין את בני אדם...לא נתנו מצוות אלא לצרוף
בהן את הבריות.

Mek.RS 144

57. היה הקב"ה יודע שאין יש׳ ממתינים בדברות אלא ארבעים
יום לפיכך השמיע להם הקב"ה מתוך האש והחשך.

PRE 98a

58. יצא קול ראשון והשמים והארץ רעשו ממנו והימים והנהרות
ברחו ההרים והגבעות נתמוטטו וכל האילנות כרעו.

PRE 97a

59. בזמן שבקש הקב"ה ליתן תורה ליש׳ התחיל העולם למוג ולמוט
שמא חס ושלום לא יקבלו יש׳ התורה ויהפוך העולם לתהו ובהו.

MT 75.1

60. התנה הקב"ה עם מעשה בראשית ואמר להם אם יש׳ מקבלים
התורה אתם מתקיימים ואם לא אני מחזיר אתכם לתהו ובהו.

TB Šabbat 88a

61. כבר היה העולם מתמגמג והולך אילולא שעמדו יש׳ לפני הר
סיני ואמרו כל אשר דבר ה׳ נעשה ונשמע.

PR 100a

62. וכולם ירדו שנונים לכלות את העולם אם לא יקבלו יש׳ את
התורה.

MT 68.10

63. אילמלא אין יש׳ מקבלין את התורה אין דירה לא לי ולא לכם.

PR 97a

64. ׳ויתיצבו׳ ניצפפו מלמד שהיו מתיראין מפני הזיקין ומפני
הזוועות מפני הרעמים ומפני הברקים הבאים.

Mek. Baḥodeš 3

65. עדר שעמדו על הר סיני לא היו עומדים באלירא אלא ביראה
ורתת וזיע.

Šir R. IV,4,1

XUM

66. וכיון שהיה הקול יוצא היתה כל אומה ואומה שומעת קולו של הקב"ה ונפשו יוצאה...היה הקול יוצא והורג לאומות שלא קבלו את התורה.

Tan.B II,13

67. היה הקול יוצא ונחלק לשבעה קולות ומשבעה קולות לשבעים לשון כדי שישמעו כל האומות וכל אומה ואומה שומעת קולו בלשון האומה ונפשותיהם יוצאות.

Tan. Š'mot 25

68. כפה הקב"ה הר כגיגית על יש׳ ואמר להם אם אתם מקבלים את התורה מוטב ואם לאו שם תהא קבורתכם.

TB A.Z. 2b

69. ׳תחת התפוח עוררתיך׳ נתלש הר סיני ונצב בשמי מרום והיו יש׳ נתונים תחתיו...אמר הקב"ה אם אתם מקבלים עליכם תורתי מוטב ואם לאו הריני כובש עליכם ההר הזה והורג אתכם.

Šir R. VIII,5,1

70. מהר המוריה נתלש כחלה מעיסה ממקום שנעקד יצחק אבינו אמר הקב"ה הואיל ויצחק אביהם נעקד עליו נאה לבניו לקבל עליו את התורה.

MT 68.9

71. לגיבור שהוא מפלפל בזיינו ומראה פנים לכל צד כך פנים בפנים דבר ה׳ עמכם.

PR 100b

72. רבנין אמרו חרב תורה.

BR 21.9

73. אילו היה כתוב ׳קול ה׳ בכחו׳ לא היה העולם יכול לעמוד אלא ׳קול ה׳ בכח׳ בכח של כל אחד ואחד.

SR 29.1

74. כיון שבאו לסיני ונגלה להם פרחה נשמתם על שדבר עמהם.

SR 29.4

75. ועוד בשעה שהתחיל הקב"ה לדבר רעשו העליונים והתחתונים ולא היו יש׳ יכולים לעמוד על רגליהם.

M.Aś.HaD. 69

XUM

76. בשעה ששמעו יש׳ ׳ אנכי ה׳ אלהיך׳ נתקע תלמוד תורה בלבם
והיו למדים ולא היו משכחין. באו אצל משה ואומר משה רבינו
תעשה את פרוזביון שליח בינותינו ומה הנייה יש באבדה שלנו?
חזרו להיות לומדים ושוכחים.

Šir R. I,2,4

77. כל דיבור ודיבור שיצא מפי הקב"ה יצאה נשמתן של יש׳...
ומאחר שמדיבור ראשון יצתה נשמתן דיבור שני היאך קיבלו?
הוריד טל שעתיד להחיות בו מתים והחיה אותם.

TB Šabbat 88b

78. אמר להן הקב"ה לענני כבוד רבצו טל לפני בני...והקב"ה
מרביץ לפניהם טללים וגשמים.

Tos. ʿArakin 1.10

79. התחילה התורה מבקשת רחמים על יש׳ מן הקב"ה. אמרה לפניו
רבש"ע יש מלך משיא בתו והורג את בן ביתו? כל העולם שמח
בשבילי ובניך מתים. מיד חזרה נשמתן.

Šir R. V,16,3

80. והקב"ה ממתיק בחכו הדיבור ואמר להם לא בני אתם? אנכי ה׳
אלהיכם עמי אתם חביבין אתם לפני. והתחיל מפתה עד שחזרה
נשמתן.

Šir R. V,16,3

81. הקב"ה שלח לכל אחד ואחד מיש׳ שני מלאכים אחד שמניח ידו
על לבו שלא תצא נשמתו ואחד שמגביה את ראשו שיוכל לראות
את בוראו.

M.Aś.HaD. 69

82. כששמעו יש׳ הדיבור יוצא מפי הקב"ה חזרו לאחורים י"ב
מילין ויצאה נשמתן.

M.Aś.HaD. 69

83. דור המדבר חסידים היו...ולא קבלו יש׳ עליהם את התורה עד
שהלאה אותם...כיצד? מאתים וארבעים מיל הלכו יש׳ כשקבלו
התורה...לכך נאמר ׳אשרי תממי דרך ההולכים בתורת ה׳׳
בתמימות קבלו את התורה.

MT 119.6

84. כל דיבור ודיבור שיצאה מפי הקב"ה חזרו יש׳ לאחוריהם י"ב
מיל והיו מלאכי השרת מדדן.

TB Šabbat 88b

85. ולא מלאכי השרת בלבד אלא אף הקב"ה.

Mek. Baḥodeš 9

86. אין כיבוס בגדים בתורה שאינו טעון טבילה.

Mek. Baḥodeš 3

87. אמר להם הרי אתם קשורים תפוסין וענובין מחר באו וקבלו עליכם את כל המצוות.

Mek. Baḥodeš 3

88. דו פרצופים היה והיה יוצא והורג לאומות שלא קבלו את התורה ונותן חיים ליש' שקבלו את התורה.

Tan. Š'mot 25

89. כשנגלה הקב"ה בסיני נתן כח בע"ז והשתחווה לו.

MT 31.4

90. בפנים הרבה נראה להם הקב"ה בסיני. בפנים זעופות בפנים הדופות בפנים מוריקות בפנים שמחות בפנים משחקות בפנים מסבירות.

PR 101a

91. 'וידבר אלהים את כל הדברים' הכל בבת אחת. ממית ומחיה בבת אחת מכה ורופא בבת אחת...יוצר אור ובורא חשך עושה שלום ובורא רע כל אלה בבת אחת.

Tan. Yitro 12

92. בשעה שעמדו יש' על הר סיני...למה הדבר דומה? לחבר אחד קשה שראה עכנה אחת קשה אמר מי יוכל לחבר את זו? אמר לו ולא את החבר? הכל ממך.

DR VII,10

93. 'שחורה אני ונאוה' במה שאני שחורה בו אני נאוה.

SR 23.10

XUM

SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

)	א		l	ל
b	ב		m	מ
g	ג		n	נ
d	ד		s	ס
h	ה		(	ע
v,w	ו		p,f	פ
z	ז		z	צ
ḥ	ח		q	ק
ṭ	ט		r	ר
y	י		ś	שׂ
î	י	(vowel)	š	שׁ
k	כ		t	ת

LIST OF ABBREVIATED TITLES

Aggadic Texts

AB	*ʾAlfaʾ Beîtaʾ d'Rabbî ʾAqîbaʾ*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. III.
Agg. Šir	*ʾAggadat Šîr Hašîrîm*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
ARN	*ʾAbot d'Rabbî Natan*. Cited by version and chapter.
BaR	*Midraš B'midbar Rabbah*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
BHM	*Beît Hamidraš*. Cited by volume and page.
BR	*Midraš B'rʾešît Rabbah*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
DR	*Midraš D'barîm Rabbah*. Cited by book and chapter.
Hai Gaon	*ʾIggeret Rab Haî Gaʾon*. Cited by page in MG.
K'tapuaḥ	*Midraš K'tapuaḥ B'ʿaẓeî Hayaʿar*. Cited by page.
Leqaḥ	*Midraš Leqaḥ Tob*. Cited by Biblical chapter and verse.
M.As.HaD	*Midraš Aśeret Hadibrot*. Cited by page.
Mek.	*Mekîltaʾ d'Rabbî Îšmaʾel*. Cited by chapter and subsection.
Mek. RS	*Mekiltaʾ d'Rabbî Šim'ʿon ben Yohai*. Cited by page.
MG	*Midrašeî G'ʾulah*. Cited by page.
M. Hallel	*Midraš Hallel*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. V.
MHG	*Midraš Hagadol*. Cited by Biblical chapter and verse.
MK	*Midraš Konen*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. II.

XUM

M. Šir	*Midraš Šîr Hašîrîm*. Cited by page.
MT	*Midraš T'hillîm*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
M. Tannaim	*Midraš Tannaʾîm*. Cited by book and page.
M. T'murah	*Midraš T'murah*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. I.
NRSY	*Nistarot d'Rabbî Šim'ʿon ben Yoḥaî*. Cited by page in MG.
PGH	*Pereq Gan Haḥayîm*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. V.
PH	*Pesîqtaʾ Ḥad'taʾ*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. VI.
PM	*Pirqeî Mašîaḥ*. Cited by page in MG.
PR	*Pesîqtaʾ Rabbatî*. Cited by page.
PRE	*Pirqeî d'Rabbî ʾElîʿezer*. Cited by page.
PRK	*Pesîqtaʾ d'Rab Kahanaʾ*. Cited by chapter.
Ruth R.	*Midraš Ruth Rabbah*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
SE	*Sefer ʾEliyahu*. Cited by page in MG.
SER	*Seder ʾEliyahu Rabbah*. Cited by chapter.
Seʿudat Lev.	*Seʿudat Levîatan*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. VI.
SGE	*Seder Gan ʿEden*. Cited by version and page in BHM, vol. II (version I), vol. III (version II).
Sifra	*Sifraʾ niqraʾ Sefer Torat Kohanîm*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
Sifre N.	*Sifreî d'beî Rab* on B'midbar. Cited by paragraph.
Sifre Dt.	*Sifreî d'beî Rab* on D'barîm. Cited by paragraph.
Šir R.	*Midraš Šîr Hašîrîm Rabbah*. Cited by book, chapter, and paragraph.
SR	*Midraš Š'mot Rabbah*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.

SZ	*Sefer Zerubbabel*. Cited by page in MG.
Tan.	*Midraš Tanḫumaʾ*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
Tan. B	*Midraš Tanḫumaʾ*, edited S. Buber. Cited by book and page.
TB	*Talmud Bablî*. Cited by tractate and page.
Tos.	*Toseftaʾ*. Cited by tractate, chapter, and sub-section.
Vayošaʿ	*Midraš Vayošaʿ*. Cited by page in BHM, vol. I.
VR	*Midraš Vayiqraʾ Rabbah*. Cited by chapter and paragraph.
Y	*Yalqut Šim'ʿoni*. Cited by paragraph.
ET	"English translation".

Works by Mircea Eliade

CH	*Cosmos and History*
FC	*The Forge and the Crucible*
IS	*Images and Symbols*
MDM	*Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries*
MR	*Myth and Reality*
PCR	*Patterns in Comparative Religion*
Q	*The Quest*
RSI	*Rites and Symbols of Initiation*
Sh	*Shamanism*
SP	*The Sacred and the Profane*
TO	*The Two and the One*
YI	*Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*
Z	*Zalmoxis*

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[1] All translations in this dissertation are my own, except where otherwise noted. In many cases, of course, my translation and the published ET may coincide.

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